

DEMONOLOGY

In the Form of a Dialogue

Divided into Three Books

By King James I

Printed by Robert Waldegrave,

Printer to the King's Majesty. Anno 1597.

With Royal Privilege.

*The original work being in the Public Domain, translated into
modern English by James Jordan.*

The Preface. To the Reader.

The alarming increase right now in this country of these detestable slaves of the Devil—the witches or enchanter—has prompted me (beloved reader) to quickly send out this following treatise of mine. I protest that it is not in any way to show off my learning or cleverness, but only, moved by conscience, to do what I can to resolve the doubts in many people's hearts: both that such assaults by Satan are most certainly practiced, and that the instruments of them deserve the most severe punishment.

This is against the damnable opinions held mainly by two men in our age. One, called Scot, an Englishman, is not ashamed to publicly print his denial that there can be such a thing as witchcraft, and so he maintains the old error of the Sadducees in denying the existence of spirits. The other, called Wierus, a German physician, has published a public apology for all these practitioners of the craft, whereby, by arguing for their impunity, he plainly reveals himself to have been one of that profession.

And to make this treatise more pleasant and easy to read, I have put it in the form of a Dialogue, which I have divided into three books: The first speaks of magic in general and necromancy in particular. The second concerns sorcery and witchcraft. And the third contains a discourse on all these kinds of spirits and specters that appear and trouble people, together with a conclusion to the whole work.

My intention in this labor is only to prove two things, as I have already said: the one, that such devilish arts have existed and still exist. The other, what exact trial and severe punishment they deserve. Therefore I reason about what kinds of things are possible to be performed in these arts, and by what natural causes they may be done—not that I touch on every particular detail of the Devil's power, for that would be infinite—but only, speaking scholastically (since this cannot be fully expressed in our language), I reason upon the genus, leaving the species and differentia to be understood within it.

For example, speaking of the power of magicians in the first book and sixth chapter: I say that they can suddenly have all kinds of dainty dishes brought to them by their familiar spirit. Since, as a thief, he delights to steal, and as a spirit, he can subtly and suddenly enough transport the same. Now under this genus may be comprehended all particulars depending on it—such as bringing wine out of a wall (as we have often heard practiced), and such others—which particulars are sufficiently proved by the reasons of the general.

And similarly in the second book on witchcraft in particular, and the fifth chapter: I say and prove by various arguments that witches can, by the power of their Master, cure or cast on diseases. Now by these same reasons that prove their power by the Devil over diseases in general, their power in particular is also proved: such as weakening the nature of some men to make them unable for women, and making it abound in others more than the ordinary course of nature would permit. And similarly in all other particular sicknesses.

But one thing I will ask you to observe in all these places where I reason upon the Devil's power: the different ends and purposes that God as the first cause, and the Devil as his instrument and second cause, aim at in all these actions of the Devil (as God's hangman). For where the Devil's intention in them is always to destroy either the soul or the body, or both, that he is so permitted to deal with: God, on the contrary, always draws out of that evil glory to himself—either by the ruin of the wicked in his justice, or by the trial of the patient and the amendment of the faithful, who are awakened by that rod of correction.

Having thus declared to you my full intention in this Treatise, you will easily excuse, I doubt not, both my omitting to declare the whole particular rites and secrets of these unlawful arts, as well as their infinite and wonderful practices, as being neither of them pertinent to my purpose. The reason for this is given at the end of the first chapter of the third book. And whoever likes to be curious in these things may read, if he will, of their practices in Bodin's *Daemonomanie*, collected with greater diligence than written with judgment, together with the confessions of those who have been apprehended at this time. If he

would know what the opinion of the ancients has been concerning their power, he shall see it well described by Hyperius and Hemmingius, two recent German writers, besides innumerable other modern theologians who write largely upon that subject. And if he would know the particular rites and curiosities of these black arts (which is both unnecessary and perilous), he will find it in the fourth book of Cornelius Agrippa, and in Wierus, of whom I spoke.

And so wishing my pains in this Treatise (beloved Reader) to be effective in arming all those who read it against the above-mentioned errors, and recommending my goodwill to your friendly acceptance, I bid you heartily farewell.

James R[ex]

First Book.

Argument.

The introduction to the whole work. The description of magic in particular.

Chapter I.

Argument.

Proven by Scripture that these unlawful arts, in general, have existed and can be practiced.

Philomathes and Epistemon discuss the matter.

Philomathes:

I am truly very glad to have met you today, for I believe you can better resolve some things I have great doubt about than anyone else I could have met.

Epistemon:

In whatever I can, whatever you like to ask me, I will willingly and freely give my opinion. And if I do not prove it sufficiently, I am heartily content that a better argument should carry the day.

Philomathes:

What do you think of the strange news that now supplies conversation for everyone at their meetings—I mean these witches?

Epistemon:

Surely they are astonishing. And I think such clear and plain confessions on this subject have never occurred in any age or country.

Philomathes:

No question—if they are true. But that is exactly what the learned doctors doubt.

Epistemon:

What part of it do you doubt?

Philomathes:

Everything, as far as I can yet perceive—especially that there is such a thing as witchcraft or witches. I would ask you to resolve me on this if you can. For I have reasoned with various people on the matter and could never be satisfied.

Epistemon:

I shall gladly do the best I can. But I think it the more difficult since you deny the thing itself in general. For as it is said in the logic schools: “Against one who denies the first principles, there is no disputing.” Still, for the part that witchcraft and witches have existed and do exist: the former is clearly proven by the Scriptures, and the latter by daily experience and confessions.

Philomathes:

I know you will bring up Saul’s Pythoness, but that, as it appears, will not help you much.

Epistemon:

Not only that passage, but many others. But I marvel why that should not help me much.

Philomathes:

The reasons are these. First, you may consider that Saul, being troubled in spirit and having fasted long before (as the text testifies), came to a woman rumored to have such knowledge in order to inquire about such important news. He had a guilty conscience for his heinous offenses—especially for that same unlawful curiosity and horrible defection. Then the woman suddenly cried out in great amazement at the strange sight she claimed to see, revealing him to be the king though he was disguised and had denied it before. It is no wonder, I say, that with his senses thus distracted, he could not perceive her faking her voice—he being in another chamber and seeing nothing. Next, what could have been, or was, raised? The spirit of Samuel? That is profane and against all theology. The Devil in his likeness? That seems unlikely, because either God would not permit him to

come in the shape of His saints (for then the prophets in those days could never have been sure what spirit spoke to them in their visions), or else that he could foretell what was to come afterward—for prophecy proceeds only from God, and the Devil has no knowledge of things to come.

Epistemon:

Yet if you will mark the words of the text, you will find clearly that Saul saw that apparition. For even granting that Saul was in another chamber during the making of the circles and conjurations necessary for that purpose (as none of that craft will permit others to behold at that time), yet it is evident from the text that as soon as that unclean spirit was fully risen, she called Saul in. For it is said in the text that Saul knew him to be Samuel—which could not have been from merely hearing tell of an old man with a mantle, since there were many more old men dead in Israel than Samuel, and the common clothing of that whole country was mantles. As to the next point—that it was not the spirit of Samuel—I grant it. In proving which you need not insist, since all Christians of whatever religion agree on that, and none but mere idiots, or necromancers, or witches doubt it. And that the Devil is permitted at some times to put himself in the likeness of the saints is plain in the Scriptures, where it is said that Satan can transform himself into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). Nor could that bring any inconvenience to the visions of the prophets, since it is most certain that God will not permit him so to deceive His own—but only such as first willfully deceive themselves by running to him. Whom God then suffers to fall into their own snares and justly permits them to be deluded with great efficacy of deceit, because they would not believe the truth (as Paul says). And as to the Devil's foretelling of things to come, it is true that he knows not all future things, but yet that he knows part of them the tragic event of this history declares (which the wit of a woman could never have foretold)—not that he has any prescience, which is only proper to God, nor yet knows anything by looking upon God as in a mirror (as the good angels do), he being forever debarred from the favorable presence and countenance of his Creator. But only by one of these two means: either as being worldly wise and taught by continual experience ever since the creation, he judges by likelihood of things to come according to what has passed

before and the natural causes, in respect of the vicissitude of all worldly things; or else by God's employing him in a task and so foreseeing thereof—as appears to have been in this case, of which we find the very like in Micaiah's prophetic discourse to King Ahab (1 Kings 22).

But to prove this my first proposition—that there can be such a thing as witchcraft and witches—there are many more places in the Scriptures than this (as I said before). First, in the law of God it is plainly prohibited (Exodus 22). But certainly the Law of God speaks nothing in vain, neither does it lay curses or enjoin punishments upon shadows, condemning that to be evil which is not in essence or being, as we call it. Secondly, it is plain where wicked Pharaoh's wise men imitated a number of Moses' miracles (Exodus 7 & 8), to harden the tyrant's heart thereby. Thirdly, did not Samuel say to Saul (1 Samuel 15) that disobedience is as the sin of witchcraft? To compare to a thing that were not would be far too absurd. Fourthly, was not Simon Magus a man of that craft (Acts 8)? And fifthly, what was she that had the spirit of Python (Acts 16)?—beside innumerable other places that would be tiresome to recite.

Chapter II.

Argument.

What kind of sin the practitioners of these unlawful arts commit. The division of these arts. And what are the means that allure anyone to practice them.

Philomathes:

But I think it very strange that God should permit any humankind (since they bear His own image) to fall into so gross and filthy a defection.

Epistemon:

Although man in his creation was made in the image of the Creator (Genesis 1), yet through his fall, having once lost it, it is only restored again in part by grace alone to the elect. So all the rest, falling away from God, are given over into the hands of the Devil that enemy, to

bear his image. And being once so given over, the greatest and grossest impiety is the pleasantest and most delightful to them.

Philomathes:

But may it not suffice him to have indirect rule and procure the perdition of so many souls by alluring them to vices and to the following of their own appetites—suppose he does not abuse so many simple souls by making them directly acknowledge him as their master?

Epistemon:

No, surely not. For he uses every man over whom he has rule according to their temperament and knowledge. And so those whom he finds most simple, he plainly discovers himself to them. For he, being the enemy of man's salvation, uses all the means he can to entrap them so far in his snares that it may afterward be impossible for them (even if they would) to free themselves from the same.

Philomathes:

Then this sin is a sin against the Holy Ghost.

Epistemon:

It is in some, but not in all.

Philomathes:

How so? Are not all those who run directly to the Devil in one category?

Epistemon:

God forbid. For the sin against the Holy Ghost has two branches: The one is a falling back from the whole service of God and a refusal of all His precepts. The other is the doing of the first with knowledge—knowing that they do wrong against their own conscience and the testimony of the Holy Spirit, having once had a taste of the sweetness of God's mercies (Hebrews 6, 10). Now in the first of these two, all sorts of necromancers, enchanters, or witches are comprehended; but in the last, none but such as err with this knowledge that I have spoken of.

Philomathes:

Then it appears that there are more sorts than one that are direct professors of his service. And if so, I pray you tell me how many, and what are they?

Epistemon:

There are principally two sorts to which all the parts of that unhappy art are reduced: whereof the one is called Magic or Necromancy, the other Sorcery or Witchcraft.

Philomathes:

What, I pray you? And how many are the means whereby the Devil allures persons into any of these snares?

Epistemon:

Even by these three passions that are within ourselves: Curiosity in great wits; thirst of revenge for some wrongs deeply apprehended; or greedy appetite for wealth, caused through great poverty. As to the first of these, Curiosity, it is only the enticement of magicians or necromancers. And the other two are seductive to sorcerers and witches. For that old and crafty Serpent, being a spirit, easily spies our affections and so conforms himself thereto to deceive us to our ruin.

Chapter III.

Argument.

The significations and etymologies of the words Magic and Necromancy. The difference between Necromancy and Witchcraft. What are the entrances and beginnings that bring anyone to the knowledge thereof.

Philomathes:

I would gladly first hear what thing it is that you call Magic or Necromancy.

Epistemon:

This word Magic, in the Persian tongue, imports as much as to be a contemplator or interpreter of divine and heavenly sciences. Which, being first used among the Chaldeans through their ignorance of the

true divinity, was esteemed and reputed among them as a principal virtue. And therefore it was unjustly named with an honorable style, which name the Greeks imitated, generally importing all these kinds of unlawful arts.

And this word Necromancy is a Greek word, compounded of Νεκρῶν (nekron, meaning “of the dead”) and μαντεία (manteia, meaning “prophecy” or “divination”), which is to say, prophecy by the dead. This last name is given to this black and unlawful science by the figure of synecdoche, because it is a principal part of that art to serve themselves with dead carcasses in their divinations.

Philomathes:

What difference is there between this art and witchcraft?

Epistemon:

Surely, the difference commonly put between them is very merry, and in a manner true; for they say that the witches are servants only, and slaves to the Devil; but the necromancers are his masters and commanders.

Philomathes:

How can that be true, that any men being especially addicted to his service can be his commanders?

Epistemon:

Yes, they may be—but it is only secundum quid (in a certain sense). For it is not by any power that they can have over him, but ex pacto only (by a pact alone): whereby he obliges himself in some trifles to them, that he may on the other part obtain the fruition of their body and soul, which is the only thing he hunts for.

Philomathes:

A very inequitable contract, forsooth. But I pray you, discourse unto me: what is the effect and secrets of that art?

Epistemon:

That is too large a field you give me. Yet I shall do my good will, as summarily as I can, to run through the principal points thereof.

As there are two sorts of folk that may be enticed to this art—to wit, learned or unlearned—so there are two means which are the first stirrers up and feeders of their curiosity, thereby to make them give themselves over to the same. Which two means I call the Devil's school and his rudiments.

The learned have their curiosity wakened up and fed by that which I call his school: this is judicial astrology. For divers men, having attained to a great perfection in learning and yet remaining over-bare (alas) of the spirit of regeneration and the fruits thereof, finding all natural things common as well to the stupid pedants as unto them, they assay to vindicate unto themselves a greater name by not only knowing the course of heavenly things but likewise to cling to the knowledge of things to come thereby. Which, at the first face appearing lawful unto them (in respect the ground thereof seems to proceed of natural causes only), they are so allured thereby that, finding their practice to prove true in sundry things, they study to know the cause thereof. And so mounting from degree to degree upon the slippery and uncertain scale of curiosity, they are at last enticed—even where lawful arts or sciences fail to satisfy their restless minds—to seek to that black and unlawful science of Magic.

Where, finding at the first that such diverse forms of circles and conjurations rightly joined thereunto will raise such diverse forms of spirits to resolve them of their doubts, and attributing the doing thereof to the power inseparably tied or inherent in the circles, and many words of God confusedly wrapped in, they blindly glory of themselves as if they had by their quickness of wit made a conquest of Pluto's dominion and were become emperors over the Stygian dwellings. Where, in the meantime (miserable wretches), they are become in very deed bond-slaves to their mortal enemy; and their knowledge, for all that they presume thereof, is nothing increased—except in knowing evil and the horrors of Hell for punishment thereof, as Adam's was by the eating of the forbidden tree.

Chapter IV.

Argument.

The description of the rudiments and school, which are the entrances to the art of Magic. And in particular the differences between Astronomy and Astrology. Division of Astrology into diverse parts.

Philomathes:

But I pray you likewise do not forget to tell what are the Devil's rudiments.

Epistemon:

His rudiments I call first in general all that which is commonly called the virtue of word, herb, and stone—which is used by unlawful charms without natural causes. As likewise all kinds of practices, freits [superstitious observances], or other like extraordinary actions which cannot abide the true touch of natural reason.

Philomathes:

I would have you make that plainer by some particular examples, for your proposition is very general.

Epistemon:

I mean either by such kinds of charms as common daft wives use for healing of forsaken goods [bewitched livestock], for preserving them from evil eyes, by knitting rowan-trees or sundry kinds of herbs to the hair or tails of the goods; by curing the worm [a disease in animals], by stemming of blood, by healing of horse-crooks [strains or injuries in horses], by turning of the riddle [a form of divination], or doing of such like innumerable things by words, without applying anything meet to the part offended, as physicians do; or else by staying married folk to have naturally to do with each other (by knitting so many knots upon a point at the time of their marriage). And such-like things which men use to practice in their merriness.

For when unlearned men (being naturally curious and lacking the true knowledge of God) find these practices to prove true—as sundry of them will do, by the power of the Devil for deceiving men, and not by any inherent virtue in these vain words and superstitions—and being desirous to win a reputation to themselves in such-like turns, they

either (if they be of the modest sort) seek to be learned by some that are experimented in that art (not knowing it to be evil at the first), or else being of the grosser sort, run directly to the Devil for ambition or desire of gain, and plainly contract with him thereupon.

Philomathes:

But it seems to me these means which you call the school and rudiments of the Devil are things lawful, and have been approved for such in all times and ages—as in special this science of astrology, which is one of the special members of the mathematics.

Epistemon:

There are two things which the learned have observed from the beginning in the science of the heavenly creatures, the planets, stars, and such like. The one is their course and ordinary motions, which for that cause is called *Astronomia*—which word is a compound of νόμος and ἀστέρων, that is to say, the law of the stars. And this art indeed is one of the members of the mathematics, and not only lawful but most necessary and commendable.

The other is called *Astrologia*, being compounded of ἀστέρων and λόγος, which is to say, the word and preaching of the stars. Which is divided into two parts.

The first: by knowing thereby the powers of herbs/plants, and sicknesses, the course of the seasons and the weather, being ruled by their influence—which part, depending upon the former, although it be not of itself a part of mathematics, yet it is not unlawful being moderately used, suppose not so necessary and commendable as the former.

The second part is to trust so much to their influences as thereby to foretell what commonwealths shall flourish or decay; what persons shall be fortunate or unfortunate; what side shall win in any battle; what man shall obtain victory at singular combat; what way and of what age shall men die; what horse shall win at match-running; and diverse such like incredible things, wherein Cardanus, Cornelius

Agrippa, and diverse others have more curiously than profitably written at large.

Of this root last spoken of springs innumerable branches, such as the knowledge by nativities [horoscopes], chiromancy [palmistry], geomancy, hydromancy, arithmancy, physiognomy, and a thousand others which were much practiced and held in great reverence by the Gentiles of old. And this last part of astrology whereof I have spoken, which is the root of their branches, was called by them *pars fortunæ* (divination).

This part now is utterly unlawful to be trusted in or practiced amongst Christians, as leaning to no ground of natural reason; and it is this part which I called before the Devil's school.

Philomathes:

But yet many of the learned are of the contrary opinion.

Epistemon:

I grant it, yet I could give my reasons to fortify and maintain my opinion, if to enter into this disputation it would not draw me quite off the ground of our discourse—besides the misspending of the whole day thereupon. One word only I will answer to them, and that in the Scriptures (which must be an infallible ground to all true Christians): that in the Prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 10) it is plainly forbidden to believe or hearken unto them that prophesy and fore-speak by the course of the planets and stars.

Chapter V.

Argument.

How far the using of charms is lawful or unlawful. The description of the forms of circles and conjurations. And what causes the magicians themselves to weary thereof.

Philomathes:

Well, you have said far enough on that argument. But how do you now prove that these charms or unnatural practices are unlawful? For so many honest and merry men and women have publicly practiced some

of them that I think if you would accuse them all of witchcraft, you would affirm more than you will be believed in.

Epistemon:

I see that if you had paid good attention to the nature of that word by which I named it, you would not have been in this doubt, nor mistaken me so far as you have done. For although, as none can be scholars in a school and not be subject to the master thereof, so none can study and put into practice (for study alone and knowledge is more perilous than offensive, and it is the practice only that makes the greatness of the offense) the circles and art of magic without committing an horrible defection from God. And yet, as they that read and learn their rudiments are not the more subject to any schoolmaster if it please not their parents to put them to the school thereafter, so they who ignorantly prove these practices—which I call the Devil's rudiments—unknowing them to be baits cast out by him for trapping such as God will permit to fall into his hands: this kind of folk, I say, no doubt are to be judged the best of, in respect they use no invocation nor help of him (by their knowledge at least) in these turns, and so have never entered themselves into Satan's service. Yet to speak truly for my own part (I speak but for myself), I desire not to make so near riding. For in my opinion our enemy is over crafty, and we over weak (except the greater grace of God) to assay such hazards wherein he presses to trap us.

Philomathes:

You have reason, forsooth; for as the common proverb saith: They that sup kale with the Devil have need of long spoons. But now I pray you go forward in the describing of this art of magic.

Epistemon:

Once they have come unto this perfection in evil, in having any knowledge (whether learned or unlearned) of this black art, they then begin to be weary of the raising of their Master by conjured circles—being both so difficult and perilous—and so come plainly to a contract with him, wherein is specially contained forms and effects.

Philomathes:

But I pray you, before you go further, discourse me somewhat of their circles and conjurations, and what should be the cause of their wearying thereof. For it should seem that that form should be less fearful yet than the direct haunting and society with that foul and unclean spirit.

Epistemon:

I think you take me to be a witch myself, or at the least would fain swear yourself prentice to that craft. Always, as I may, I shall shortly satisfy you in that kind of conjurations which are contained in such books which I call the Devil's School.

There are four principal parts: the persons of the conjurers; the action of the conjuration; the words and rites used to that effect; and the spirits that are conjured.

You must first remember to lay the ground that I told you before: which is, that it is no power inherent in the circles, or in the holiness of the names of God blasphemously used, nor in whatsoever rites or ceremonies at that time used, that either can raise any infernal spirit or yet limit him perforce within or without these circles. For it is he only, the father of all lies, who having first of all prescribed that form of doing, feigning himself to be commanded and restrained thereby, will be loath to pass the bounds of these injunctions—as well thereby to make them glory in the ruling over him (as I said before), as likewise to make himself so to be trusted in these little things that he may have the better commodity thereafter to deceive them in the end with a trick once for all—I mean the everlasting perdition of their soul and body.

Then laying this ground, as I have said, these conjurations must have few or more in number of the persons conjurers (always passing the singular number) according to the quality of the circle and form of apparition.

Two principal things cannot well in that errand be wanted: holy water (whereby the Devil mocks the Papists) and some present of a living

thing unto him. There are likewise certain seasons, days, and hours that they observe in this purpose.

These things being all ready and prepared, circles are made triangular, quadrangular, round, double or single, according to the form of apparition that they crave. But to speak of the diverse forms of the circles, of the innumerable characters and crosses that are within and without and throughout the same, of the diverse forms of apparitions that that crafty spirit eludes them with, and of all such particulars in that action, I remit it to over-many that have busied their heads in describing of the same, as being but curious and altogether unprofitable.

And this far only I touch: that when the conjured spirit appears—which will not be while after many circumstances, long prayers, and much muttering and murmuring of the conjurers, like a Papist priest dispatching a hunting Mass—how soon, I say, he appears, if they have missed one jot of all their rites, or if any of their feet once slide over the circle through terror of his fearful apparition, he pays himself at that time in his own hand of that due debt which they ought him and otherwise would have delayed longer to have paid him—I mean he carries them with him body and soul.

If this isn't a just cause to make them weary of these forms of conjuration, I leave it to you to judge upon, considering the drawn-out labor, the precise keeping of days and hours (as I have said), the terribleness of apparition, and the present peril that they stand in in missing the least circumstance or freit (superstition) that they ought to observe. And on the other part, the Devil is glad to move them to a plain and square dealing with him, as I said before.

Chapter VI.

Argument.

The Devil's contract with the magicians. The division thereof into two parts. What is the difference between God's miracles and the Devil's.

Philomathes:

Indeed there is cause enough, but rather to leave him altogether than to run more plainly to him, if they were wise in how he deals with them. But go forward now, I pray you, to these turns once they become deacons in this craft.

Epistemon:

From the time that they once plainly begin to contract with him: The effect of their contract consists in two things—in forms and effects, as I began to tell already, were it not that you interrupted me (for although the contract be mutual, I speak first of that part wherein the Devil obliges himself to them).

By forms, I mean in what shape or fashion he shall come unto them when they call upon him. And by effects, I understand in what special sorts of services he binds himself to be subject unto them.

The quality of these forms and effects is less or greater according to the skill and art of the magician. For as to the forms: to some of the baser sort of them he obliges himself to appear at their calling upon him by such a proper name which he shows unto them, either in likeness of a dog, a cat, an ape, or such-like other beast; or else to answer by a voice only. The effects are to answer to such demands as concern curing of diseases, their own particular household management, or such other base things as they require of him.

But to the most curious sort, in the forms he will oblige himself to enter into a dead body and give such answers of the event of battles, of matters concerning the estate of commonwealths, and such-like other great questions. Yea, to some he will be a continual attender in form of a page. He will permit himself to be conjured for the space of so many years, either in a tablet or a ring or such-like thing which they may easily carry about with them. He gives them power to sell such wares to others, whereof some will be dearer and some better cheap according to the lying or true speaking of the spirit that is conjured therein.

Not but that in very deed all devils must be liars; but so they abuse the simplicity of these wretches that become their scholars, that they make

them believe that at the fall of Lucifer some spirits fell in the air, some in the fire, some in the water, some in the land—in which elements they still remain. Whereupon they build that such as fell in the fire or in the air are truer than they who fell in the water or in the land—which is all but mere trifles and forged by the author of all deceit. For they fell not by weight as a solid substance to stick in any one part; but the principal part of their fall consisting in quality, by the falling from the grace of God wherein they were created, they continued still thereafter (and shall do until the latter day) in wandering through the world as God's hangmen to execute such turns as He employs them in. And when any of them are not occupied in that, return they must to their prison in hell (as it is plain in the miracle that Christ wrought at Gennesaret, Matthew 8), therein at the latter day to be all enclosed forever.

And as they deceive their scholars in this, so do they in imprinting in them the opinion that there are so many princes, dukes, and kings amongst them, every one commanding fewer or more legions and ruling in diverse arts and quarters of the earth. For though I will not deny that there be a form of order amongst the angels in heaven, and consequently was amongst them before their fall, yet either that they bruik [enjoy] the same since then, or that God will permit us to know by damned devils such heavenly mysteries of His which He would not reveal to us neither by Scripture nor prophets, I think no Christian will once think it. But by the contrary, of all such mysteries as He hath closed up with His seal of secrecy, it becomes us to be contented with an humble ignorance, they being things not necessary for our salvation.

But to return to the purpose: as these forms wherein Satan obliges himself to the greatest of the magicians are wonderfully curious, so are the effects correspondent unto the same. For he will oblige himself to teach them arts and sciences (which he may easily do, being so learned a knave as he is); to carry them news from any part of the world (which the agility of a spirit may easily perform); to reveal to them the secrets of any persons, so being they be once spoken—for the thought none knows but God, except so far as ye may guess by their countenance, as one who is doubtless learned enough in physiognomy.

Yea, he will make his scholars to creep into credit with princes by foretelling them many great things—part true, part false. For if all were false, he would lose credit at all hands; but always doubtful, as his oracles were.

And he will also make them to please princes by fair banquets and dainty dishes carried in short space from the farthest part of the world. For no man doubts but he is a thief, and his agility (as I spoke before) makes him come such speed. Such-like, he will guard his scholars with fair armies of horsemen and footmen in appearance, castles and forts—which all are but impressions in the air, easily gathered by a spirit drawing so near to that substance himself. As in like manner he will learn them many jugglery tricks at cards, dice, and such-like, to deceive men's senses thereby; and such innumerable false practices, which are proven by over-many in this age—as they who are acquainted with that Italian called Scoto yet living can report.

And yet are all these things but deluding of the senses, and no ways true in substance, as were the false miracles wrought by King Pharaoh's magicians for counterfeiting Moses. For that is the difference betwixt God's miracles and the Devil's: God is a creator; what He makes appear in miracle, it is so in effect. As Moses' rod being cast down was no doubt turned into a natural serpent; whereas the Devil (as God's ape) counterfeiting that by his magicians made their wands to appear so only to men's outward senses—as kythed [appeared] in effect by their being devoured by the other. For it is no wonder that the Devil may delude our senses, since we see by common proof that simple jugglers will make an hundred things seem both to our eyes and ears otherwise than they are.

Now as to the magician's part of the contract, it is in a word that thing which I said before the Devil hunts for in all men.

Philomathes:

Surely you have said much to me in this art, if all that you have said be as true as wonderful.

Epistemon:

For the truth in these actions, it will be easily confirmed to any that pleases to take pain upon the reading of diverse authentic histories and the inquiring of daily experiences. And as for the truth of their possibility—that they may be, and in what manner—I trust I have alleged nothing whereunto I have not joined such probable reasons as I leave to your discretion to weigh and consider. One word only I omitted concerning the form of making of this contract, which is either written with the magician's own blood, or else being agreed upon (in terms his school-master) touches him in some part, though peradventure no mark remain—as it doth with all witches.

Chapter VII.

Argument.

The reason why the art of magic is unlawful. What punishment they merit. And who may be accounted guilty of that crime.

Philomathes:

Surely you have made this art appear very monstrous and detestable. But what, I pray you, shall be said to such as maintain this art to be lawful, for as evil as you have made it?

Epistemon:

I say they savor of the pan themselves, or at least little better. And yet I would be glad to hear their reasons.

Philomathes:

There are two principally that ever I heard used, beside that which is founded upon the common proverb (that the necromancers command the Devil, which you have already refuted). The one is grounded upon a received custom. The other upon an authority which some think infallible.

Upon custom: we see that diverse Christian princes and magistrates, severe punishers of witches, will not only oversee magicians to live within their dominions, but even sometimes delight to see them prove some of their practices.

The other reason is that Moses, being brought up (as it is expressly said in the Scriptures) in all the sciences of the Egyptians—whereof no doubt this was one of the principal—and he notwithstanding of this art pleasing God as he did, consequently that art professed by so godly a man could not be unlawful.

Epistemon:

As to the first of your reasons, grounded upon custom: I say an evil custom can never be accepted for a good law. For the over-great ignorance of the word in some princes and magistrates, and the contempt thereof in others, moves them to sin heavily against their office in that point.

As to the other reason, which seems to be of greater weight, if it were formed in a syllogism, it behooved to be in many terms and full of fallacies (to speak in terms of logic). For first, that that general proposition affirming Moses to be taught in all the sciences of the Egyptians should conclude that he was taught in magic, I see no necessity. For we must understand that the Spirit of God there, speaking of sciences, understands them that are lawful; for except they be lawful, they are but abusively called sciences and are but worthless indeed: *Nam homo pictus, non est homo* [For a painted man is not a man].

Secondly, granting that he had been taught in it, there is great difference betwixt knowledge and practicing of a thing (as I said before). For God knows all things, being always good, and of our sin and our infirmity proceeds our ignorance.

Thirdly, granting that he had both studied and practiced the same (which is more than monstrous to be believed by any Christian), yet we know well enough that before ever the Spirit of God began to call Moses, he was fled out of Egypt, being forty years of age, for the slaughter of an Egyptian, and in his good-father Jethro's land first called at the fiery bush, having remained there other forty years in exile. So that suppose he had been the wickedest man in the world before, he then became a changed and regenerate man, and very little of old Moses remained in him. Abraham was an idolater in Ur of

Chaldea before he was called. And Paul, being called Saul, was a most sharp persecutor of the saints of God while that name was changed.

Philomathes:

What punishment then think you merits these magicians and necromancers?

Epistemon:

The like no doubt that sorcerers and witches merit—and rather so much greater as their error proceeds of the greater knowledge, and so draws nearer to the sin against the Holy Ghost. And as I say of them, so say I the like of all such as consult, inquire, entertain, and oversee them—which is seen by the miserable ends of many that ask counsel of them. For the Devil hath never better tidings to tell to any than he told to Saul. Neither is it lawful to use so unlawful instruments, were it never for so good a purpose. For that axiom in theology is most certain and infallible (Acts 3): *Nunquam faciendum est malum ut bonum inde eveniat* [Never must evil be done that good may come of it].

Second Book.

Argument.

The description of sorcery and witchcraft in particular.

Chapter I.

Argument.

Proven by Scripture that such a thing can be. And the reasons refuted of all such as would call it but an imagination and melancholic humor.

Philomathes:

Now since you have satisfied me so fully concerning magic or necromancy, I will pray you to do the like in sorcery or witchcraft.

Epistemon:

That field is likewise very large. And although in the mouths and pens of many, yet few know the truth thereof so well as they believe

themselves—as I shall, so shortly as I can, make you (God willing) as easily to perceive.

Philomathes:

But I pray you before you go further, let me interrupt you here with a short digression: which is, that many can scarcely believe that there is such a thing as witchcraft. Whose reasons I will shortly allege unto you, that you may satisfy me as well in that as you have done in the rest.

For first, whereas the Scripture seems to prove witchcraft to be by diverse examples—and specially by sundry of the same which you have alleged—it is thought by some that these places speak of magicians and necromancers only, and not of witches. As in special, these wise men of Pharaoh who counterfeited Moses' miracles were magicians, say they, and not witches. As likewise that Pythoness that Saul consulted with. And so was Simon Magus in the New Testament, as that very style imports.

Secondly, where you would oppose the daily practice and confession of so many, that is thought likewise to be but very melancholic imaginations of simple raving creatures.

Thirdly, if witches had such power of witching folk to death (as they say they have), there had been none left alive long since in the world but they—at the least, no good or godly person of whatsoever estate could have escaped their devilry.

Epistemon:

Your three reasons, as I take it, are grounded: the first of them negatively upon the Scripture; the second affirmatively upon physic; and the third upon the certain proof of experience.

As to your first: it is most true indeed that all these wise men of Pharaoh were magicians of art. As likewise it appears well that the Pythoness with whom Saul consulted was of that same profession, and so was Simon Magus. But you omitted to speak of the law of God, wherein are all magicians, diviners, enchanters, sorcerers, witches, and

whatsoever of that kind that consults with the Devil plainly prohibited and alike threatened against.

And besides that, she who had the spirit of Python in the Acts (Acts 16), whose spirit was put to silence by the Apostle, could be no other thing but a very sorcerer or witch—if you admit the vulgar distinction to be in a manner true, whereof I spoke in the beginning of our conference. For that spirit whereby she conquered such gain to her master was not at her raising or commanding as she pleased to appoint, but spoke by her tongue as well publicly as privately—whereby she seemed to draw nearer to the sort of demoniacs or possessed, if that conjunction betwixt them had not been of her own consent, as it appeared by her not being tormented therewith, and by her conquering of such gain to her masters (as I have already said).

As to your second reason grounded upon physic, in attributing their confessions or apprehensions to a natural melancholic humor: any that pleases physically to consider upon the natural humor of melancholy, according to all the physicians that ever wrote thereupon, they shall find that that will be over short a cloak to cover their knavery with. For as the humor of melancholy in itself is black, heavy, and terrene, so are the symptoms thereof in any persons that are subject thereto: leanness, paleness, desire of solitude; and if they come to the highest degree thereof, mere folly and mania. Whereas by the contrary, a great number of them that ever have been convicted or confessors of witchcraft—as may be presently seen by many that have at this time confessed—they are by the contrary, I say, some of them rich and worldly-wise, some of them fat or corpulent in their bodies, and most part of them altogether given over to the pleasures of the flesh, continual haunting of company, and all kind of merriness both lawful and unlawful—which are things directly contrary to the symptoms of melancholy whereof I spoke, and further experience daily proves how loath they are to confess without torture, which witness their guiltiness. Whereas by the contrary, the melancholics never spare to bewray themselves by their continual discourses, feeding thereby their humor in that which they think no crime.

As to your third reason, it scarcely merits an answer. For if the Devil their master were not bridled, as the Scriptures teach us, suppose there were no men nor women to be his instruments, he could find ways enough without any help of others to wrack all mankind—whereunto he employs his whole study, and goes about like a roaring lion (as Peter saith, 1 Peter 5) to that effect. But the limits of his power were set down before the foundations of the world were laid, which he hath not power in the least jot to transgress.

But beside all this, there is over great a certainty to prove that they are, by the daily experience of the harms that they do both to men and whatsoever thing men possess—whom God will permit them to be the instruments so to trouble or visit—as in my discourse of that art you shall hear clearly proved.

Chapter II.

Argument.

The etymology and signification of that word sorcery. The first entrance and apprenticeship of them that give themselves to that craft.

Philomathes:

Come on then, I pray you, and return where you left.

Epistemon:

This word sorcery is a Latin word, which is taken from casting of the lot, and therefore he that uses it is called Sortiarius from sorte [from lot or chance]. As to the word witchcraft, it is nothing but a proper name given in our language.

The cause wherefore they were called sortiarii proceeded from their practices seeming to come of lot or chance: such as the turning of the riddle, the knowing of the form of prayers, or such-like tokens—if a person diseased would live or die. And in general, that name was given them for using of such charms and superstitions as that craft teaches them.

Many points of their craft and practices are common betwixt the magicians and them, for they serve both one master, although in

diverse fashions. And as I divided the necromancers into two sorts—learned and unlearned—so must I divide them into other two: rich and of better account, poor and of baser degree.

These two degrees now of persons that practice this craft answer to the passions in them which (I told you before) the Devil used as means to entice them to his service. For such of them as are in great misery and poverty, he allures to follow him by promising unto them great riches and worldly commodity. Such as though rich yet burn in a desperate desire of revenge, he allures them by promises to get their turn satisfied to their heart's contentment.

It is to be noted now that that old and crafty enemy of ours assails none, though touched with any of these two extremities, except he first find an entrance ready for him—either by the great ignorance of the person he deals with, joined with an evil life, or else by their carelessness and contempt of God. And finding them in utter despair for one of these two former causes that I have spoken of, he prepares the way by feeding them craftily in their humor and filling them further and further with despair until he find the time proper to discover himself unto them.

At which time—either upon their walking solitary in the fields, or else lying pensive in their bed, but always without the company of any other—he either by a voice or in likeness of a man inquires of them what troubles them, and promises them a sudden and certain way of remedy upon condition on the other part that they follow his advice and do such things as he will require of them.

Their minds being prepared beforehand, as I have already spoken, they easily agree unto that demand of his. And then sets another tryst where they may meet again.

At which time, before he proceed any further with them, he first persuades them to addict themselves to his service—which being easily obtained, he then discovers what he is unto them, makes them to renounce their God and baptism directly, and gives them his mark upon some secret place of their body, which remains sore unhealed

until his next meeting with them, and thereafter ever insensible, howsoever it be nipped or pricked by any, as is daily proved, to give them a proof thereby that as in that doing he could hurt and heal them, so all their ill and well doing thereafter must depend upon him.

And besides that, the intolerable dolor that they feel in that place where he hath marked them serves to waken them and not to let them rest until their next meeting again—fearing lest otherwise they might either forget him, being as new prentices and not well enough founded yet in that fiendish folly, or else remembering of that horrible promise they made him at their last meeting, they might loathe the same and press to call it back.

At their third meeting, he makes a show to be careful to perform his promises—either by teaching them ways how to get themselves revenged, if they be of that sort; or else by teaching them lessons how by most vile and unlawful means they may obtain gain and worldly commodity, if they be of the other sort.

Chapter III.

Argument.

The witches' actions divided into two parts. The actions proper to their own persons. Their actions toward others. The form of their conventions, and adoring of their Master.

Philomathes:

You have said now enough of their initiating in that order. It remains then that you discourse upon their practices once they are passed prentices—for I would fain hear what is possible for them to perform in very deed. Although they serve a common Master with the necromancers (as I have before said), yet serve they him in another form. For as the means are diverse which allure them to these unlawful arts of serving the Devil, so by diverse ways use they their practices, answering to these means which first the Devil used as instruments in them—though all tending to one end: to wit, the enlarging of Satan's tyranny and crossing of the propagation of the Kingdom of Christ, so far as lay in the possibility either of the one or other sort, or of the Devil their Master.

For where the magicians, as allured by curiosity, in the most part of their practices seek principally the satisfying of the same, and to win to themselves a popular honor and estimation: these witches on the other part, being enticed either for the desire of revenge or of worldly riches, their whole practices are either to hurt men and their goods, or what they possess, for satisfying of their cruel minds in the former, or else by the wrack in whatsoever sort of any whom God will permit them to have power of, to satisfy their greedy desire in the last point.

Epistemon:

In two parts their actions may be divided: the actions of their own persons, and the actions proceeding from them towards any other. And this division being well understood will easily resolve you what is possible to them to do. For although all that they confess is no lie upon their part, yet doubtless in my opinion a part of it is not indeed according as they take it to be—and in this I mean by the actions of their own persons. For as I said before, speaking of magic, that the Devil deceives the senses of these scholars of his in many things, so say I the like of these witches.

Philomathes:

Then I pray you first to speak of that part of their own persons, and then you may come next to their actions towards others.

Epistemon:

To the effect that they may perform such services of their false Master as he employs them in, the Devil—as God’s ape—counterfeits in his servants this service and form of adoration that God prescribed and made His servants to practice. For as the servants of God publicly use to convene for serving of Him, so makes he them in great numbers to convene (though publicly they dare not) for his service.

As none convenes to the adoration and worship of God except they be marked with His seal, the Sacrament of Baptism: so none serves Satan and convenes to the adoring of him that are not marked with that mark whereof I already spoke.

As the minister sent by God teaches plainly at the time of their public conventions how to serve Him in spirit and truth: so that unclean spirit, in his own person, teaches his disciples at the time of their convening how to work all kind of mischief, and craves count of all their horrible and detestable proceedings passed for advancement of his service.

Yea, that he may the more vividly counterfeit and scorn God, he oftentimes makes his slaves to convene in these very places which are destined and ordained for the convening of the servants of God (I mean by churches).

But this far which I have yet said I not only take it to be true in their opinions, but even so to be indeed. For the form that he used in counterfeiting God amongst the Gentiles makes me so to think: As God spoke by His oracles, spoke he not so by his? As God had as well bloody sacrifices as others without blood, had not he the like? As God had churches sanctified to His service, with altars, priests, sacrifices, ceremonies, and prayers—had he not the like polluted to his service? As God gave responses by Urim and Thummim, gave he not his responses by the entrails of beasts, by the singing of fowls, and by their actions in the air? As God by visions, dreams, and raptures revealed what was to come and what was His will unto His servants—used he not the like means to forewarn his slaves of things to come?

Yea, even as God loved cleanness, hated vice and impurity, and appointed punishments therefore—used he not the like (though falsely I grant, and but in eschewing the less inconvenient to draw them upon a greater), yet dissimulated he not, I say, so far as to appoint his priests to keep their bodies clean and undefiled before their asking responses of him? And feigned he not God to be a protector of every virtue and a just revenger of the contrary?

This reason then moves me, that as he is that same Devil and as crafty now as he was then, so will he not spare a particle in these actions that I have spoken of concerning the witches' persons.

But further, witches oftentimes confess not only his convening in the church with them, but his occupying of the pulpit. Yea, their form of

adoration to be the kissing of his hinder parts. Which though it seem ridiculous, yet may it likewise be true, seeing we read that in Calicut he appearing in form of a goat-buck hath publicly that dishonest homage done unto him by every one of the people. So ambitious is he and greedy of honor (which procured his fall) that he will even imitate God in that part where it is said that Moses could see but the hinder parts of God for the brightness of His glory (Exodus 33)—and yet that speech is spoken but anthropopathically [in human terms, figuratively].

Chapter IV.

Argument.

What are the ways possible whereby the witches may transport themselves to places far distant, and what are impossible and mere illusions of Satan. And the reasons thereof.

Philomathes:

But by what way say they, or think you it possible, that they can come to these unlawful conventions?

Epistemon:

There is the thing which I esteem their senses to be deluded in. And though they lie not in confessing of it, because they think it to be true, yet not to be so in substance or effect. For they say that by diverse means they may convene, either to the adoring of their Master or to the putting in practice any service of his committed unto their charge.

One way is natural, which is natural riding, going, or sailing, at what hour their Master comes and advertises them. And this way may be easily believed.

Another way is somewhat more strange, and yet is it possible to be true: which is by being carried by the force of the Spirit which is their conductor, either above the earth or above the sea swiftly to the place where they are to meet. Which I am persuaded to be likewise possible, in respect that as Habakkuk was carried by the Angel in that form to the den where Daniel lay (Apocrypha of Bel and the Dragon), so think I the Devil will be ready to imitate God as well in that as in other

things. Which is much more possible to him to do, being a spirit, than to a mighty wind (being but a natural meteor) to transport from one place to another a solid body, as is commonly and daily seen in practice.

But in this violent form they cannot be carried but a short bounds, agreeing with the space that they may retain their breath. For if it were longer, their breath could not remain unquenched, their body being carried in such a violent and forcible manner. As by example: if one fall off a small height, his life is but in peril according to the hard or soft landing. But if one fall from a high and steep rock, his breath will be forcibly banished from the body before he can win to the earth, as is oft seen by experience.

And in this transporting they say themselves that they are invisible to any other except amongst themselves—which may also be possible in my opinion. For if the Devil may form what kind of impressions he pleases in the air, as I have said before speaking of magic, why may he not far easier thicken and obscure so the air that is next about them by contracting it straight together, that the beams of any other man's eyes cannot pierce through the same to see them?

But the third way of their coming to their conventions is that wherein I think them deluded. For some of them say that being transformed in the likeness of a little beast or fowl, they will come and pierce through whatsoever house or church, though all ordinary passages be closed, by whatsoever open the air may enter in at. And some say that their bodies lying still as in an ecstasy, their spirits will be ravished out of their bodies and carried to such places. And for verifying thereof will give evident tokens, as well by witnesses that have seen their body lying senseless in the meantime, as by naming persons whom with they met, and giving tokens what purpose was amongst them, whom otherwise they could not have known. For this form of journeying they affirm to use most when they are transported from one country to another.

Philomathes:

Surely I long to hear your own opinion of this. For they are like old wives' trifles about the fire. The reasons that move me to think that these are mere illusions are these. First, for them that are transformed in likeness of beasts or fowls can enter through so narrow passages—although I may easily believe that the Devil could by his workmanship upon the air make them appear to be in such forms, either to themselves or to others—yet how he can contract a solid body within so little room, I think it is directly contrary to itself: to be made so little and yet not diminished; to be so straitly drawn together and yet feel no pain. I think it is so contrary to the quality of a natural body, and so like to the little transubstantiated god in the Papists' Mass, that I can never believe it. So to have a quantity is so proper to a solid body that as all philosophers conclude, it cannot be any more without one than a spirit can have one. For when Peter came out of the prison (Acts 12) and the doors all locked, it was not by any contracting of his body in so little room, but by the giving place of the door though unseen by the jailers. And yet is there no comparison when this is done betwixt the power of God and of the Devil.

As to their form of ecstasy and spiritual transporting, it is certain the soul's going out of the body is the only definition of natural death. And who are once dead, God forbid we should think that it should lie in the power of all the devils in Hell to restore them to their life again—although he can put his own spirit in a dead body, which the necromancers commonly practice, as you have heard. For that is the office properly belonging to God. And besides that, the soul once parting from the body cannot wander any longer in the world but to its own resting place must it go immediately, abiding the conjunction of the body again at the latter day. And what Christ or the prophets did miraculously in this case, it cannot in no Christian man's opinion be made common with the Devil.

As for any tokens that they give for proving of this, it is very possible to the Devil's craft to persuade them to these means. For he being a spirit, may he not so ravish their thoughts and dull their senses that their body lying as dead, he may object to their spirits as it were in a dream, and (as the poets write of Morpheus) represent such forms of

persons, of places, and other circumstances as he pleases to delude them with? Yea, that he may deceive them with the greater efficacy, may he not at that same instant, by fellow angels of his, delude such other persons so in that same fashion whom with he makes them to believe that they met—that all their reports and tokens, though severally examined, may every one agree with another? And that whatsoever actions, either in hurting men or beasts, or whatsoever other thing that they falsely imagine at that time to have done, may by himself or his marrows at that same time be done indeed—so as if they would give for a token of their being ravished at the death of such a person within so short space thereafter, whom they believe to have poisoned or bewitched at that instant, might he not at that same hour have smitten that same person by the permission of God, to the farther deceiving of them and to move others to believe them?

And this is surely the likeliest way and most according to reason which my judgment can find out in this and whatsoever other unnatural points of their confession. And by these means shall we sail surely betwixt Charybdis and Scylla, in eschewing the not believing of them altogether on the one part, lest that draw us to the error that there is no witches; and on the other part in believing of it make us to eschew the falling into innumerable absurdities, both monstrously against all theology divine and philosophy human.

Chapter V.

Argument.

Witches' actions towards others. Why there are more women of that craft than men. What things are possible for them to effectuate by the power of their master. The reasons thereof. What is the surest remedy of the harms done by them.

Philomathes:

Forsooth, your opinion in this seems to carry most reason with it. And since you have ended then the actions belonging properly to their own persons: say forward now to their actions used towards others.

Epistemon:

In their actions used towards others, three things ought to be considered: First, the manner of their consulting thereupon; next, their part as instruments; and last, their master's part, who puts the same in execution.

As to their consultations thereupon, they use them often in the churches where they convene for adoring. At what time their master inquiring at them what they would be at, every one of them proposes unto him what wicked turn they would have done—either for obtaining of riches, or for revenging them upon any whom they have malice at. Who granting their demand (as no doubt willingly he will, since it is to do evil), he teaches them the means whereby they may do the same.

As for little trifling turns that women have ado with, he causes them to joint dead corpses and to make powders thereof, mixing such other things there amongst as he gives unto them.

Philomathes:

But before you go further, permit me I pray you to interrupt you one word, which you have put me in memory of by speaking of women. What can be the cause that there are twenty women given to that craft where there is one man?

Epistemon:

The reason is easy: for as that sex is frailer than man is, so is it easier to be entrapped in these gross snares of the Devil—as was over well proved to be true by the Serpent's deceiving of Eve at the beginning, which makes him the homelier with that sex since then.

Philomathes:

Return now where you left.

Epistemon:

To some others at these times he teaches how to make pictures of wax or clay: that by the roasting thereof, the persons that they bear the name of may be continually melted or dried away by continual

sickness. To some he gives such stones or powders as will help to cure or cast on diseases. And to some he teaches kinds of uncouth poisons which physicians understand not (for he is far cunninger than man in the knowledge of all the occult properties of nature). Not that any of these means which he teaches them (except the poisons which are composed of things natural) can of themselves help anything to these turns that they are employed in—but only being God's ape, as well in that as in all other things.

Even as God by His sacraments (which are earthly of themselves) works a heavenly effect, though no ways by any cooperation in them; and as Christ by clay and spittle wrought together opened the eyes of the blind man (John 9), suppose there was no virtue in that which He outwardly applied—so the Devil will have his outward means to be shows as it were of his doing, which hath no part of cooperation in his turns with him, how far that ever the fools be abused in the contrary.

And as to the effects of these two former parts—to wit, the consultations and the outward means—they are so wonderful as I dare not allege any of them without joining a sufficient reason of the possibility thereof. For leaving all the small trifles among wives, and to speak of the principal points of their craft: For the common trifles thereof they can do without converting well enough by themselves.

These principal points I say are these: They can make men or women to love or hate other—which may be very possible to the Devil to effectuate, seeing he being a subtle spirit knows well enough how to persuade the corrupted affection of them whom God will permit him so to deal with.

They can lay the sickness of one upon another—which likewise is very possible unto him. For since by God's permission he laid sickness upon Job, why may he not far easier lay it upon any other? For as an old practitioner, he knows well enough what humor dominates most in any of us, and as a spirit he can subtly waken up the same, making it peccant or to abound as he thinks meet for troubling of us, when God will so permit him. And for the taking off of it, no doubt he will be

glad to relieve such of present pain as he may think by these means to persuade to be caught in his everlasting snares and fetters.

They can bewitch and take the life of men or women by roasting of the pictures, as I spoke of before—which likewise is very possible to their Master to perform. For although (as I said before) that instrument of wax have no virtue in that turn doing, yet may he not very well—even by that same measure that his conjured slaves melt that wax at the fire—may he not I say at these same times subtly as a spirit so weaken and scatter the spirits of life of the patient, as may make him on the one part for faintness to sweat out the humor of his body? And on the other part, for the not concurrence of these spirits which causes his digestion, so debilitate his stomach that his radical humor continually sweating out on the one part, and no new good such being put in the place thereof for lack of digestion on the other, he at last shall vanish away—even as his picture will do at the fire. And that knavish and cunning workman, by troubling him only at some times, makes a proportion so near betwixt the working of the one and the other that both shall end as it were at one time.

They can raise storms and tempests in the air, either upon sea or land—though not universally, but in such a particular place and prescribed bounds as God will permit them so to trouble. Which likewise is very easy to be discerned from any other natural tempests that are meteors, in respect of the sudden and violent raising thereof together with the short enduring of the same. And this is likewise very possible to their master to do, he having such affinity with the air as being a spirit, and having such power of the forming and moving thereof, as you have heard me already declare. For in the Scripture that style of the Prince of the air is given unto him (Ephesians 2).

They can make folk to become frenetic or maniac—which likewise is very possible to their master to do, since they are but natural sicknesses, and so he may lay on these kinds as well as any others.

They can make spirits either to follow and trouble persons, or haunt certain houses and affray oftentimes the inhabitants—as hath been known to be done by our witches at this time. And likewise they can

make some to be possessed with spirits, and so to become very demoniacs. And this last sort is very possible likewise to the Devil their Master to do, since he may easily send his own angels to trouble in what form he pleases any whom God will permit him so to use.

Philomathes:

But will God permit these wicked instruments by the power of the Devil their master to trouble by any of these means any that believes in Him?

Epistemon:

No doubt—for there are three kinds of folk whom God will permit so to be tempted or troubled: the wicked for their horrible sins, to punish them in the like measure; the godly that are sleeping in any great sins or infirmities and weakness in faith, to waken them up the faster by such an uncouth form; and even some of the best, that their patience may be tried before the world, as Job's was. For why may not God use any kind of extraordinary punishment when it pleases Him, as well as the ordinary rods of sickness or other adversities?

Philomathes:

Who then may be free from these devilish practices?

Epistemon:

No man ought to presume so far as to promise any impunity to himself. For God hath before all beginnings preordained as well the particular sorts of plagues as of benefits for every man, which in the own time He ordains them to be visited with. And yet ought we not to be the more afraid for that of anything that the Devil and his wicked instruments can do against us. For we daily fight against the Devil in a hundred other ways. And therefore, just as a brave captain feels no greater fear once engaged in battle, nor abandons his goal because of the roaring shot of a cannon or the faint click of a pistol—suppose he be not certain what may light upon him—even so, we should press forward boldly in our fight against the Devil, without being any more terrified by his rarest or most unusual weapons than by the ordinary ones we face and overcome every single day.

Philomathes:

Is it not lawful then by the help of some other witch to cure the disease that is cast on by that craft?

Epistemon:

No ways lawful. For I gave you the reason thereof in that axiom of theology which was the last words I spoke of magic.

Philomathes:

How then may these diseases be lawfully cured?

Epistemon:

Only by earnest prayer to God, by amendment of their lives, and by sharp pursuing every one according to his calling of these instruments of Satan—whose punishment to the death will be a salutary sacrifice for the patient. And this is not only the lawful way but likewise the most sure. For by the Devil's means can never the Devil be cast out, as Christ says (Mark 3). And when such a cure is used, it may well serve for a short time, but at the last it will doubtless tend to the utter perdition of the patient both in body and soul.

Chapter VI.

Argument.

What sort of folk are least or most subject to receive harm by witchcraft. What power they have to harm the magistrate, and upon what respects they have any power in prison. And to what end may or will the Devil appear to them therein. Upon what respects the Devil appears in sundry shapes to sundry of them at any time.

Philomathes:

But who dare take upon him to punish them, if no man can be sure to be free from their unnatural invasions?

Epistemon:

We ought not the more for that to restrain from virtue, that the way whereby we climb thereunto be straight and perilous. But besides that, as there is no kind of persons so subject to receive harm of them as these that are of infirm and weak faith (which is the best buckler

against such invasions), so have they so small power over none as over such as zealously and earnestly pursues them, without sparing for any worldly respect.

Philomathes:

Then they are like the pest, which smites these sickest that flies it farthest and apprehends deepest the peril thereof.

Epistemon:

It is even so with them. For neither is it able for them to use any false cure upon a patient except the patient first believe in their power and so hazard the loss of his own soul; nor yet can they have less power to hurt any than such as contemns most their doings—so being it comes of faith, and not of any vain arrogance in themselves.

Philomathes:

But what is their power against the magistrate?

Epistemon:

Less or greater, according as he deals with them. For if he be slothful towards them, God is very able to make them instruments to waken and punish his sloth. But if he be the contrary, he according to the just law of God and allowable law of all nations will be diligent in examining and punishing of them: God will not permit their master to trouble or hinder so good a work.

Philomathes:

But once they've been captured and held secure, do they retain any real power over their craft?

Epistemon:

That is according to the form of their detention. If they be but apprehended and detained by any private person upon other private respects, their power no doubt either in escaping or in doing hurt is no less than ever it was before. But if on the other part their apprehending and detention be by the lawful magistrate upon the just respects of their guiltiness in that craft, their power is then no greater than before that ever they meddled with their master. For where God begins justly

to strike by His lawful lieutenants, it is not in the Devil's power to defraud or bereave him of the office or effect of his powerful and revenging scepter.

Philomathes:

But will never their master come to visit them once they be once apprehended?

Epistemon:

That is according to the estate that these miserable wretches are in. For if they be obstinate in still denying, he will not spare, when he finds time to speak with them, either if he find them in any comfort to fill them more and more with the vain hope of some manner of relief; or else if he find them in a deep despair, by all means to augment the same and to persuade them by some extraordinary means to put themselves down—which very commonly they do. But if they be penitent and confess, God will not permit him to trouble them any more with his presence and allurements.

Philomathes:

It is not good using his counsel, I see then. But I would earnestly know when he appears to them in prison, what forms uses he then to take?

Epistemon:

He appears in many different forms, just as he does at other times. As I mentioned earlier when discussing magic, he normally shows himself to that type of practitioner in whatever shape they've agreed upon among themselves beforehand. Or, if they're just beginners, it matches the nature of their magic circles or conjurations.

But to these foolish, deluded people, he appears however he chooses, in whatever way best suits their personalities. Even at their large gatherings, he shows up to different ones in different forms—we've seen this from the inconsistencies in their confessions on that point. By projecting false, deceptive images in the air, he makes himself look more terrifying to the cruder, less sophisticated types, so they'll fear and revere him more. To the cleverer, more cunning ones, he makes

himself appear less monstrous and grotesque, so they won't recoil or be repulsed by his ugliness.

Philomathes:

How can he then be felt, as they confess they have done him, if his body be but of air?

Epistemon:

I hear little of that amongst their confessions, yet may he make himself palpable, either by assuming any dead body and using the ministry thereof, or else by deluding as well their sense of feeling as seeing—which is not impossible for him to do, since all our senses, as we are so weak, and even by ordinary sicknesses will be oftentimes deluded.

Philomathes:

But I would speak one word further yet concerning his appearing to them in prison, which is this: May any other that chances to be present at that time in the prison see him as well as they?

Epistemon:

Sometimes they will, and sometimes not, as it pleases God.

Chapter VII.

Argument.

Two forms of the Devil's visible conversing in the earth, with the reasons wherefore the one of them was commonest in the time of Papistry, and the other since then. Those that deny the power of the Devil deny the power of God, and are guilty of the error of the Sadducees.

Philomathes:

Has the Devil then power to appear to any other except to such as are his sworn disciples—especially since all oracles and such-like kinds of illusions were taken away and abolished by the coming of Christ?

Epistemon:

Although it be true indeed that the brightness of the Gospel at His coming scaled the clouds of all these gross errors in Gentilism, yet that

these abusing spirits cease not since then at sometimes to appear, daily experience teaches us.

Indeed, this difference should be noted in the ways Satan appears visibly in the world. Of his two main forms of visible interaction, one has been greatly reduced and become much rarer because of the spread of the Gospel and the victories of the white horse described in the sixth chapter of Revelation. This is the form in which he appears to Christians, harasses them outwardly, or forcibly possesses them.

The other of them is become commoner and more used since then—I mean by their unlawful arts, whereupon our whole purpose has been. This we find by experience in this isle to be true. For as we know, more ghosts and spirits were seen (nor tongue can tell) in the time of blind Papistry in these countries, where now by the contrary a man shall scarcely all his time here once hear of such things. And yet were these unlawful arts far rarer at that time, and never were so much heard of nor so rife as they are now.

Philomathes:

What should be the cause of that?

Epistemon:

The varied nature of our sins brings down from God's justice correspondingly varied kinds of punishments. Therefore, in the days of Papistry, when our ancestors were deeply mistaken and ignorant, that thick fog of error allowed the Devil to move among them more openly and familiarly—as if using childish, frightening terrors to mock and expose their own childish errors.

By contrast, we today, who hold to sound religion yet rebel against it in our daily lives, are justly accused by God through that very sin of rebellion (as Samuel calls it). Our willful lives fight against the faith we profess.

Philomathes:

Since you are entered now to speak of the appearing of spirits, I would be glad to hear your opinion in that matter. For many deny that any such spirits can appear in these days, as I have said.

Epistemon:

Doubtless who denies the power of the Devil would likewise deny the power of God, if they could for shame. For since the Devil is the very contrary opposite to God, there can be no better way to know God than by the contrary: as by the one's power (though a creature) to admire the power of the great Creator; by the falsehood of the one to consider the truth of the other; by the injustice of the one to consider the Justice of the other; and by the cruelty of the one to consider the mercifulness of the other—and so forth in all the rest of the essence of God and qualities of the Devil.

But I fear indeed there be over many Sadducees in this world that deny all kinds of spirits. For convicting of whose error, there is cause enough if there were no more, that God should permit at sometimes spirits visibly to kythe [appear].

Third Book.

Argument.

The description of all these kinds of spirits that trouble men or women. The conclusion of the whole Dialogue.

Chapter I.

Argument.

The division of spirits into four principal kinds. The description of the first kind of them, called Spectra and umbræ mortuorum. What is the best way to be free of their trouble.

Philomathes:

I pray you now then go forward in telling what you think fabulous, or may be believed in that case.

Epistemon:

That kind of the Devil's conversing in the earth may be divided into four different kinds, whereby he affrights and troubles the bodies of men—for of the abusing of the soul I have spoken already.

The first is where spirits trouble some houses or solitary places.

The second, where spirits follow upon certain persons and at diverse hours trouble them.

The third, when they enter within them and possess them.

The fourth is these kinds of spirits that are commonly called the Fairy.

Of the three former kinds you heard already how they may artificially be made by witchcraft to trouble folk. Now it remains to speak of their natural coming as it were, and not raised by witchcraft.

But generally I must forewarn you of one thing before I enter into this purpose: that although in my discoursing of them I divide them into diverse kinds, you must notwithstanding thereof note my phrase of speaking in that. For doubtless they are in effect but all one kind of spirits, who for abusing the more of mankind take on these sundry shapes and use diverse forms of outward actions, as if some were of nature better than others.

Now I return to my purpose. As to the first kind of these spirits, that were called by the ancients by diverse names according as their actions were. For if they were spirits that haunted some houses by appearing in diverse and horrible forms and making great din, they were called Lemures or Spectra. If they appeared in likeness of any defunct to some friends of his, they were called *umbræ mortuorum*. And so innumerable styles they got according to their actions, as I have said already.

As we see by experience how many styles they have given them in our language in the like manner. Of the appearing of these spirits we are certified by the Scriptures, where the Prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 13 and 34) and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 50) threatening the destruction of Babel and Edom declare that it shall not only be wracked but shall become so great a solitude as it shall be the habitation of owls and of Ziim and

lim (demonic spirits), which are the proper Hebrew names for these spirits.

The reason they haunt solitary places is so they can more effectively frighten and shake the faith of those who frequent such lonely spots alone. Our nature is such that we're not as easily overcome by fear when we're in company as when we're isolated—which the Devil knows perfectly well, so he chooses not to attack us except when we're vulnerable. Moreover, God will not allow him to disgrace the gatherings and communities of Christians by appearing visibly among them in public times and places.

On the other part, when he troubles certain houses that are dwelt in, it is a sure token either of gross ignorance or of some gross and slanderous sins amongst the inhabitants thereof—which God by that extraordinary rod punishes.

Philomathes:

But by what way or passage can these spirits enter into these houses, seeing they allege that they will enter, door and window being shut?

Epistemon:

They will choose the passage for their entrance according to the form that they are in at that time. For if they have assumed a dead body whereinto they lodge themselves, they can easily enough open without noise, any door or window and enter in thereat. And if they enter as a spirit only, any place where the air may come in at is large enough an entry for them. For as I said before, a spirit can occupy no quantity.

Philomathes:

And will God then permit these wicked spirits to trouble the rest of a dead body before the resurrection thereof? Or if He will so, I think it should be of the reprobate only.

Epistemon:

What more is the rest troubled of a dead body when the Devil carries it out of the grave to serve his turn for a space than when the witches take it up and joint it, or when swine root up the graves? The rest of

them that the Scripture speaks of is not meant by a local remaining continually in one place, but by their resting from their travails and miseries of this world until their latter conjunction again with the soul at that time to receive full glory in both.

And that the Devil may use as well the ministry of the bodies of the faithful in these cases as of the unfaithful, there is no inconvenience—for his haunting with their bodies after they are dead can no ways defile them in respect of the soul's absence. And for any dishonor it can be unto them, by what reason can it be greater than the hanging, heading, or many such shameful deaths that good men will suffer? For there is nothing in the bodies of the faithful more worthy of honor or freer from corruption by nature than in these of the unfaithful, until time they be purged and glorified in the latter day—as is daily seen by the vile diseases and corruptions that the bodies of the faithful are subject unto, as you will see clearly proved when I speak of the possessed and demoniacs.

Philomathes:

Yet there are sundry that affirm to have haunted such places where these spirits are alleged to be, and could never hear nor see anything.

Epistemon:

I think well—for that is only reserved to the secret knowledge of God, whom He will permit to see such things, and whom not.

Philomathes:

But where these spirits haunt and trouble any houses, what is the best way to banish them?

Epistemon:

By two means may only the remedy of such things be procured: The one is ardent prayer to God, both of these persons that are troubled with them and of that Church whereof they are. The other is the purging of themselves by amendment of life from such sins as have procured that extraordinary plague.

Philomathes:

And what means then these kinds of spirits when they appear in the shadow of a person newly dead, or to die, to his friends?

Epistemon:

When they appear upon that occasion, they are called wraiths in our language. Amongst the Gentiles the Devil used that much to make them believe that it was some good spirit that appeared to them then—either to forewarn them of the death of their friend, or else to discover unto them the will of the defunct, or what was the way of his slaughter, as is written in the book of the histories Prodigious. And this way he easily deceived the Gentiles because they knew not God. And to that same effect is it that he now appears in that manner to some ignorant Christians. For he dare not so delude any that knows that, neither can the spirit of the defunct return to his friend, or yet an angel use such forms.

Philomathes:

And are not our werewolves one sort of these spirits also, that haunt and trouble some houses or dwelling places?

Epistemon:

There hath indeed been an old opinion of such-like things. For by the Greeks they were called *λυκάνθρωποι* which signifies men-wolves. But to give you my straightforward opinion on this: if anything like that has ever happened, I believe it came from nothing more than an extreme natural excess of melancholy. Just as we read that this condition has made some people believe they were pitchers, others horses, and others various kinds of beasts—so I think it has so corrupted the imagination and memory of certain individuals that, during their lucid intervals, it has so completely taken over their minds that they genuinely believed they were wolves at those times. As a result, they imitated wolf behavior: going on all fours, trying to devour women and children, fighting and snapping at all the town dogs, and performing other brutish actions. Through this powerful delusion, they became beasts in their own minds—just as Nebuchadnezzar was turned into a beast for seven years (Daniel 4).

But as for their having and hiding of their hard, scaly sloughs, I consider that to be nothing more than an addition invented by uncertain reports—from the author of all lies.

Third Book.

Chapter II.

Argument.

The description of the next two kinds of spirits, whereof the one follows outwardly, the other possesses inwardly the persons that they trouble. That since all prophecies and visions are now ceased, all spirits that appear in these forms are evil.

Philomathes:

Come forward now to the rest of these kinds of spirits.

Epistemon:

As to the next two kinds—that is, either these that outwardly trouble and follow some persons, or else inwardly possess them—I will conjoin them in one, because as well the causes are alike in the persons that they are permitted to trouble, as also the ways whereby they may be remedied and cured.

Philomathes:

What kind of persons are they that use to be so troubled?

Epistemon:

Two kinds in special: Either such as being guilty of grievous offenses, God punishes by that horrible kind of scourge; or else being persons of the best nature peradventure that you shall find in all the country about them, God permits them to be troubled in that sort for the trial of their patience, and wakening up of their zeal, for admonishing of the beholders not to trust over much in themselves, since they are made of no better stuff and peradventure blotted with no smaller sins (as Christ said, speaking of them upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, Luke 13). And for giving likewise to the spectators matter to praise God, that

they meriting no better are yet spared from being corrected in that fearful form.

Philomathes:

These are good reasons for the part of God, which apparently moves Him so to permit the Devil to trouble such persons. But since the Devil has ever a contrary respect in all the actions that God employs him in, which is I pray you the end and mark he shoots at in this turn?

Epistemon:

It is to obtain one of two things thereby, if he may: The one is the loss of their life, by inducing them to such perilous places at such time as he either follows or possesses them, which may procure the same. And such-like, so far as God will permit him, by tormenting them to weaken their body and cast them into incurable diseases. The other thing that he presses to obtain by troubling of them is the loss of their soul, by enticing them to mistrust and blaspheme God—either for the intolerableness of their torments, as he assayed to have done with Job (Job 1); or else for his promising unto them to leave the troubling of them in case they would so do, as is known by experience at this same time by the confession of a young one that was so troubled.

Philomathes:

Since you have spoken now of both these kinds of spirits comprehending them in one, I must now go back again in speaking some questions of every one of these kinds in special. And first for these that follow certain persons, you know that there are two sorts of them: One sort that troubles and torments the persons that they haunt with; another sort that are serviceable unto them in all kind of their necessities, and omits never to forewarn them of any sudden peril that they are to be in. And so in this case, I would understand whether both these sorts be but wicked and damned spirits, or if the last sort be rather angels (as should appear by their actions) sent by God to assist such as He specially favors. For it is written in the Scriptures that God sends legions of angels to guard and watch over His elect (Genesis 32; 1 Kings 6; Psalm 34).

Epistemon:

I know well enough wherefrom that error which you allege has proceeded. For it was the ignorant Gentiles that were the fountain thereof. Who for that they knew not God, they forged in their own imaginations every man to be still accompanied with two spirits, whereof they called the one genius bonus, the other genius malus; the Greeks called them εὐδαίμων and κακοδαίμων—of which the former they said persuaded him to all the good he did, the other enticed him to all the evil.

But praised be God, we that are Christians and walk not amongst the Cimmerian conjectures of man know well enough that it is the good Spirit of God only—who is the fountain of all goodness—that persuades us to the thinking or doing of any good; and that it is our corrupted flesh and Satan that entices us to the contrary.

And yet the Devil, for confirming in the heads of ignorant Christians that error first maintained among the Gentiles, he whiles among the first kind of spirits that I speak of appeared in time of Papistry and blindness, and haunted diverse houses without doing any evil but doing as it were necessary turns up and down the house—and this spirit they called Brownie in our language, who appeared like a rough man. Yea, some were so blinded as to believe that their house was all the better that such spirits resorted there.

Philomathes:

But since the Devil's intention in all his actions is ever to do evil, what evil was there in that form of doing, since their actions outwardly were good?

Epistemon:

Was it not evil enough to deceive simple fools in making them to take him for an angel of light, and so to account of God's enemy as of their particular friend? Whereas by the contrary, all we that are Christians ought assuredly to know that since the coming of Christ in the flesh and establishing of His Church by the Apostles, all miracles, visions, prophecies, and appearances of angels or good spirits are ceased—which served only for the first sowing of faith and planting of the

Church. Where now the Church being established, and the white horse whereof I spoke before having made his conquest, the Law and Prophets are thought sufficient to serve us or make us inexcusable (Luke 16), as Christ says in His parable of Lazarus and the rich man.

Chapter III.

Argument.

The description of a particular sort of that kind of following spirits, called Incubi and Succubi. And what is the reason wherefore these kinds of spirits haunt most the northern and barbarous parts of the world.

Philomathes:

The next question that I would ask is likewise concerning this first of these two kinds of spirits that you have conjoined. And it is this: you know how it is commonly written and reported that amongst the rest of the sorts of spirits that follow certain persons, there is one more monstrous than all the rest—in respect as it is alleged they converse naturally with them whom they trouble and haunt with. And therefore I would know in two things your opinion herein: First, if such a thing can be; and next, if it be, whether there be a difference of sexes amongst these spirits or not.

Epistemon:

That abominable kind of the Devil's abusing of men or women was called of old Incubi and Succubi, according to the difference of the sexes that they conversed with.

By two means this great kind of abuse might possibly be performed: The one, when the Devil only as a spirit, and stealing out the sperm of a dead body, abuses them that way—they not clearly seeing any shape or feeling anything but that which he so conveys in that part. As we read of a monastery of nuns which were burnt for their being that way abused.

The other mean is when he borrows a dead body and so visibly, and as it seems unto them naturally as a man, converses with them.

But it is to be noted that in whatsoever way he uses it, that sperm seems intolerably cold to the person abused. For if he steal out the nature of a quick person, it cannot be so quickly carried but it will both lose the strength and heat by the way, which it could never have had for lack of agitation, which in the time of procreation is the procurer and waker-up of these two natural qualities. And if he occupying the dead body as his lodging expel the same out thereof in the dewy time, it must likewise be cold by the participation with the qualities of the dead body whereout of it comes.

And whereas you inquire if these spirits be divided in sexes or not, I think the rules of philosophy may easily resolve a man of the contrary. For it is a sure principle of that art that nothing can be divided in sexes except such living bodies as must have a natural seed to generate by. But we know spirits have no seed proper to themselves, nor yet can they gender one with another.

Philomathes:

How is it then that they say sundry monsters have been gotten by that way?

Epistemon:

These stories are just old wives' tales. As I've already shown you, demons have no reproductive capacity of their own. And it's obvious that the cold nature of a dead body can't contribute anything to conception—it's already dead, just like the rest of the corpse, lacking the natural heat and other vital functions needed to produce that effect. Even if such a thing were possible (which goes completely against all the laws of nature), it wouldn't create a monster—just a normal child that would have resulted if the living man and woman had had intercourse. The Devil's only role is passively transporting or transferring the semen, without adding any of its own qualities.

That said, the Devil can use his cunning to make a woman's belly swell after abusing her that way—either by stirring up her own bodily fluids or using herbs, just as we see beggars do every day to fake pregnancies. Then, when it's time for delivery, he can cause her to experience great pains like a natural birth, and slyly place in the

midwife's hands sticks, stones, or some monstrous infant brought from elsewhere. But this is more something others report and speculate about than something I actually believe.

Philomathes:

But what is the cause that this kind of abuse is thought to be most common in such wild parts of the world as Lapland and Finland, or in our North Isles of Orkney and Shetland?

Epistemon:

Because that's where the Devil finds the greatest ignorance and barbarity, so that's where he attacks most crudely—just as I already explained why there are far more female witches than male ones.

Philomathes:

Can any be so unhappy as to give their willing consent to the Devil's vile abusing them in this form?

Epistemon:

Yea, some of the witches have confessed that he has persuaded them to give their willing consent thereunto, that he may thereby have them felled the surer in his snares. But as the other compelled sort is to be pitied and prayed for, so is this most highly to be punished and detested.

Philomathes:

Is it not the thing which we call the Mare, which takes folk sleeping in their beds, a kind of these spirits whereof you are speaking?

Epistemon:

No, that's just a natural medical condition that doctors called Incubus from the Latin *ab incubando*, meaning "from lying upon." It's caused by thick phlegm dropping onto the heart and chest while we're asleep, which blocks our vital spirits and paralyzes us completely. That makes us feel like some unnatural weight or spirit is pressing down on us and holding us immobile.

Chapter IV.

Argument.

The description of the demoniacs and possessed. By what reason the Papists may have power to cure them.

Philomathes:

Well, I have told you now all my doubts, and you have satisfied me therein concerning the first of these two kinds of spirits that you have conjoined. Now I am to inquire only two things at you concerning the last kind—I mean the demoniacs.

The first is, whereby shall these possessed folks be discerned from them that are troubled with a natural phrensy or mania?

The next is, how can it be that they can be remedied by the Papists' Church, whom we counting as heretics, it should appear that one Devil should not cast out another, for then would his kingdom be divided in itself, as Christ said (Matthew 12; Mark 3).

Epistemon:

As to your first question: there are diverse symptoms whereby that heavy trouble may be discerned from a natural sickness—and specially three, omitting the diverse vain signs that the Papists attribute unto it, such as the raging at holy water, their fleeing back from the cross, their not abiding the hearing of God named, and innumerable such-like vain things that were alike tedious and useless to recite.

But to come to these three symptoms then whereof I spoke: I account the one of them to be the incredible strength of the possessed creature, which will far exceed the strength of six of the weightiest and maddest of any other men that are not so troubled.

The next is the emboldening up so far of the patient's breast and belly, with such an unnatural stirring and vehement agitation within them; and such an irony hardness of his sinews so stiffly bended out, that it were not possible to prick out as it were the skin of any other person so far—so mightily works the Devil in all the members and senses of his

body, he being locally within the same, suppose of his soul and affections thereof he have no more power than of any other man's.

The last is the speaking of sundry languages, which the patient is known by them that were acquainted with him never to have learned, and that with an uncouth and hollow voice, and all the time of his speaking a greater motion being in his breast than in his mouth.

But from this last symptom is excepted such as are altogether in the time of their possessing bereft of all their senses, being possessed with a dumb and blind spirit, whereof Christ relieved one in the 12th of Matthew.

And as to your next demand: it is first to be doubted if the Papists or any not professing the only true religion can relieve any of that trouble. And next, in case they can, upon what respects it is possible unto them.

As to the former, upon two reasons it is grounded: first, that it is known so many of them to be counterfeit, which while the clergy invents for confirming of their rotten religion. The next is, that by experience we find that few who are possessed indeed are fully cured by them—but rather the Devil is content to release the bodily hurting of them for a short space, thereby to obtain the perpetual hurt of the souls of so many that by these false miracles may be induced or confirmed in the profession of that erroneous religion—even as I told you before that he does in the false cures or casting off of diseases by witches.

As to the other part of the argument—in case they can, which rather (with reverence of the learned thinking otherwise) I am induced to believe by reason of the faithful report that men sound of religion have made according to their sight thereof—I think if so be, I say these may be the respects whereupon the Papists may have that power.

Christ gave a commission and power to His Apostles to cast out devils, which they according thereunto put in execution. The rules He bade them observe in that action were fasting and prayer, and the action

itself to be done in His name. This power of theirs proceeded not then of any virtue in them, but only in Him who directed them—as was clearly proved by Judas his having as great power in that commission as any of the rest.

It is easy then to be understood that the casting out of devils is by the virtue of fasting and prayer and in-calling of the name of God, suppose many imperfections be in the person that is the instrument—as Christ Himself teaches us of the power that false prophets shall have to cast out devils (Matthew 7).

It's no surprise, then—considering these aspects of the action—that Catholics, even though they err in many points of religion, could still accomplish this if they use the correct form prescribed by Christ for it. For how does their error in other matters make this action any worse, any more than their baptism is any worse because they err in the other sacrament and have added many vain superstitions to baptism itself?

Philomathes:

Surely it is no little wonder that God should permit the bodies of any of the faithful to be so dishonored as to be a dwelling place to that unclean spirit.

Epistemon:

There is it which I told right now would prove and strengthen my argument of the Devil's entering in the dead bodies of the faithful. For if he is permitted to enter in their living bodies—even when they are joined with the soul—how much more will God permit him to enter in their dead carrion, which is no more man but the filthy and corruptible case of man?

For as Christ says (Mark 7), it is not anything that enters within man that defiles him, but only that which proceeds and comes out of him.

Chapter V.

Argument.

The description of the fourth kind of spirits called the Fairy. What is possible therein, and what is but illusions. How far this Dialogue treats of all these things, and to what end.

Philomathes:

Now I pray you come on to that fourth kind of spirits.

Epistemon:

That fourth kind of spirits, which by the Gentiles was called Diana and her wandering court, and amongst us was called the Fairy (as I told you) or our good neighbors, was one of the sorts of illusions that was rife in the time of Papistry. For although it was held odious to prophesy by the Devil, yet those whom these kinds of spirits carried away and informed were thought to be the luckiest and of best life.

To speak of the many vain trifles founded upon that illusion—how there was a King and Queen of Fairy, of such a jolly court and train as they had; how they had a tithe and duty, as it were, of all goods; how they naturally rode and went, ate and drank, and did all other actions like natural men and women—I think it liker Virgil's Campi Elysii than anything that ought to be believed by Christians, except in general that (as I spoke sundry times before) the Devil deluded the senses of sundry simple creatures in making them believe that they saw and heard such things as were nothing so indeed.

Philomathes:

But how can it be then that sundry witches have gone to death with that confession, that they have been transported with the Fairy to such a hill, which opening, they went in, and there saw a fair Queen, who being now lighter gave them a stone that had sundry virtues, which at sundry times has been produced in judgment?

Epistemon:

I say that, even as I said before of that imaginary ravishing of the spirit forth of the body. For may not the Devil object to their fantasy, their senses being dulled and as it were asleep, such hills and houses within

them, such glistening courts and trains, and whatsoever such-like wherewith he pleases to delude them? And in the meantime their bodies being senseless, to convey in their hand any stone or such-like thing, which he makes them to imagine to have received in such a place.

Philomathes:

But what say you to their foretelling the death of sundry persons, whom they allege to have seen in these places? That is a sooth-dream (as they say), since they see it walking.

Epistemon:

I think that either they have not been sharply enough examined that gave so blunt a reason for their prophecy, or otherwise I think it likewise as possible that the Devil may prophesy to them when he deceives their imaginations in that sort, as well as when he plainly speaks unto them at other times. For their prophesying is but by a kind of vision, as it were, wherein he commonly counterfeits God among the ethnics, as I told you before.

Philomathes:

I would know now whether these kinds of spirits may only appear to witches, or if they may also appear to any other.

Epistemon:

They can do this to both groups: to innocent people, either to frighten them or to make themselves appear like a better class of spirits than unclean ones really are; and to witches, to provide them with a cover of safety so that ignorant magistrates won't punish them for it, as I just mentioned. But while the innocent ones—who are forcibly troubled by them—deserve pity, the other sort (who can be identified by claiming to prophesy through them) ought to be punished just as severely as any other witches, and perhaps even more so, because they go about it in such a deceitful way.

Philomathes:

And what makes the spirits have so different names from others?

Epistemon:

Even the knavery of that same Devil, who as he deludes the necromancers with innumerable feigned names for him and his angels—as in special making Satan, Beelzebub, and Lucifer to be three sundry spirits, where we find the two former but diverse names given to the Prince of all the rebelling angels by the Scripture. As by Christ, the Prince of all the devils is called Beelzebub in that place which I alleged against the power of any heretics to cast out devils. By John in the Revelation, the old tempter is called Satan the Prince of all the evil angels. And the last, to wit Lucifer, is but by allegory taken from the day star (so named in diverse places of the Scriptures) because of his excellency (I mean the Prince of them) in his creation before his fall.

Even so I say he deceives the witches by attributing to himself diverse names, as if every diverse shape that he transforms himself in were a diverse kind of spirit.

Philomathes:

But I have heard many more strange tales of this Fairy than you have yet told me.

Epistemon:

As well I do in that as I did in all the rest of my discourse. For because the ground of this conference of ours proceeded of your asking at me at our meeting if there was such a thing as witches or spirits, and if they had any power, I therefore have framed my whole discourse only to prove that such things are and may be, by such number of examples as I show to be possible by reason, and keeps me from dipping any further in playing the part of a dictionary to tell whatever I have read or heard in that purpose—which both would exceed faith, and rather would seem to teach such unlawful arts than to disallow and condemn them, as it is the duty of all Christians to do.

Chapter VI.

Argument.

Of the trial and punishment of witches. What sort of accusation ought to be admitted against them. What is the cause of the increasing so far of their number in this age.

Philomathes:

Then to make an end of our conference, since I see it draws late, what form of punishment think you merits these magicians and witches? For I see that you account them to be all alike guilty.

Epistemon:

They ought to be put to death according to the Law of God, the civil and imperial law, and municipal law of all Christian nations.

Philomathes:

But what kind of death, I pray you?

Epistemon:

It is commonly used by fire, but that is an indifferent thing to be used in every country according to the law or custom thereof.

Philomathes:

But ought no sex, age, nor rank to be exempted?

Epistemon:

None at all (being so used by the lawful magistrate), for it is the highest point of idolatry, wherein no exception is admitted by the law of God.

Philomathes:

Then children may not be spared?

Epistemon:

Yea, not a hair the less of my conclusion. For they are not that capable of reason as to practice such things. And for any being in company and not revealing thereof, their less and ignorant age will no doubt excuse them.

Philomathes:

I see you condemn them all that are of the counsel of such crafts.

Epistemon:

No doubt, for as I said speaking of magic, the consultants, trusters in, overseers, entertainers, or stirrers-up of these crafts-folk are equally guilty with themselves that are the practitioners.

Philomathes:

Whether may the Prince then, or supreme magistrate, spare or oversee any that are guilty of that craft upon some great respects known to him?

Epistemon:

The Prince or magistrate for further trial's cause may continue the punishing of them such a certain space as he thinks convenient. But in the end to spare the life and not to strike when God bids strike, and so severely punish in so odious a fault and treason against God, it is not only unlawful but doubtless no less sin in that magistrate than it was in Saul's sparing of Agag. And so comparable to the sin of witchcraft itself, as Samuel alleged at that time (1 Samuel 15).

Philomathes:

Surely then, I think since this crime ought to be so severely punished, judges ought to beware to condemn any but such as they are sure are guilty, neither should the clattering report of a carling serve in so weighty a case.

Epistemon:

Judges ought indeed to beware whom they condemn. For it is as great a crime (as Solomon says, Proverbs 17) to condemn the innocent as to let the guilty escape free; neither ought the report of any one infamous person be admitted for a sufficient proof, which can stand of no law.

Philomathes:

And what may a number then of guilty persons' confessions work against one that is accused?

Epistemon:

The assize must serve for interpreter of our law in that respect. But in my opinion, since in a matter of treason against the Prince, bairns or

wives, or never so defamed persons, may of our law serve for sufficient witnesses and proofs, I think surely that by a far greater reason such witnesses may be sufficient in matters of high treason against God. For who but witches can be proofs and so witnesses of the doings of witches?

Philomathes:

Indeed, I trow they will be loath to put any honest man upon their counsel. But what if they accuse folk to have been present at their imaginary conventions in the spirit, when their bodies lie senseless, as you have said?

Epistemon:

I think they are not a hair the less guilty. For the Devil durst never have borrowed their shadow or similitude to that turn if their consent had not been at it. And the consent in these turns is death by the law.

Philomathes:

Then Samuel was a witch. For the Devil resembled his shape and played his person in giving response to Saul.

Epistemon:

Samuel was dead as well before that, and so none could slander him with meddling in that unlawful art. For the cause why, as I take it, that God will not permit Satan to use the shapes or similitude of any innocent persons at such unlawful times is that God will not permit that any innocent persons shall be slandered with that vile defection. For then the Devil would find ways anew to calumniate the best. And this we have in proof by them that are carried with the Fairy, who never see the shadows of any in that court but of them that thereafter are tried to have been brethren and sisters of that craft. And this was likewise proved by the confession of a young lass troubled with spirits laid on her by witchcraft—that although she saw the shapes of diverse men and women troubling her and naming the persons whom these shadows represent, yet never one of them are found to be innocent but all clearly tried to be most guilty, and the most part of them confessing the same.

And besides that, I think it hath been seldom heard tell of that any whom persons guilty of that crime accused as having known them to be their marrows by eyesight (and not by hearsay) but such as were so accused of witchcraft could not be clearly tried upon them were at the least publicly known to be of a very evil life and reputation—so jealous is God, I say, of the fame of them that are innocent in such causes.

And besides that, there are two other good methods that can be used to test them: one is finding their mark and testing its insensitivity. The other is their floating on water.

Just as in a secret murder, if the murderer ever handles the victim's body afterward, it will gush fresh blood—as if the blood were crying to heaven for revenge—God having appointed that supernatural sign to reveal that hidden, unnatural crime, so it seems God has appointed (as a supernatural sign of the witches' monstrous impiety) that water will refuse to accept into its embrace those who have cast off the sacred water of baptism and deliberately rejected its benefits.

No, not even their eyes can shed tears (no matter how much you threaten or torture them) until they first repent—God not allowing them to fake their stubbornness in such a horrible crime—even though women in particular can otherwise shed tears at the slightest pretext whenever they choose, even crocodile tears if they want to dissemble.

Philomathes:

Well, we have made this conference to last as long as leisure would permit. And to conclude then, since I am to take my leave of you, I pray God to purge this country of these devilish practices—for they were never so rife in these parts as they are now.

Epistemon:

I pray God that so be too. But the causes are over manifest that makes them to be so rife. For the great wickedness of the people on the one part procures this horrible defection, whereby God justly punishes sin by a greater iniquity. And on the other part, the consummation of the world and our deliverance drawing near (Revelation 12) makes Satan

to rage the more in his instruments, knowing his kingdom to be so near
an end.

And so farewell for this time.

FINIS.

News from Scotland
Declaring the Damnable life and death of Doctor
Fian, a notable Sorcerer, who was burned at
Edinburgh in January last. 1591.

Which Doctor was register to the Devil that sundry times preached at North Berwick Kirk, to a number of notorious Witches.

With the true examinations of the said Doctor and Witches, as they uttered them in the presence of the Scottish King.

Discovering how they pretended to bewitch and drown His Majesty in the sea coming from Denmark with such other wonderful matters as the like hath not been heard of at any time.
Published according to the Scottish Copy.

At London
Printed for William Wright.

To the Reader.

The manifold untruths which are spread abroad concerning the detestable actions and apprehension of those witches whereof this history following truly entreats have caused me to publish the same in print—and the rather for that sundry written copies are lately dispersed thereof, containing that the said witches were first discovered by means of a poor peddler traveling to the town of Tranent, and that by a wonderful manner he was in a moment conveyed at midnight from Scotland to Bordeaux in France (being places of no small distance between) into a merchant's cellar there, and after, being sent from Bordeaux into Scotland by certain Scottish merchants to the King's Majesty, that he discovered those witches and was the cause of their apprehension—with a number of matters miraculous and incredible. All which in truth are most false.

Nevertheless, to satisfy a number of honest minds who are desirous to be informed of the verity and truth of their confessions (which for certainty is more strange than the common report runs, and yet with

more truth), I have undertaken to publish this short treatise, which declares the true discourse of all that has happened, as well what was pretended by those wicked and detestable witches against the King's Majesty, as also by what means they wrought the same.

All which examinations (gentle reader) I have here truly published as they were taken and uttered in the presence of the King's Majesty, praying thee to accept it for verity, the same being so true as cannot be reproved.

Discourse.

A true discourse of the apprehension of sundry witches lately taken in Scotland, some are executed, and some are yet imprisoned.

With a particular recital of their examinations, taken in the presence of the King's Majesty.

God by His omnipotent power has at all times and daily does take such care and is so vigilant for the weal and preservation of His own, that thereby He disappoints the wicked practices and evil intents of all such as by any means whatsoever seek indirectly to conspire anything contrary to His holy will. Yea, and by the same power He has lately overthrown and hindered the intentions and wicked dealings of a great number of ungodly creatures, no better than devils—who, suffering themselves to be allured and enticed by the Devil whom they served and to whom they were privately sworn, entered into the detestable art of witchcraft, which they studied and practiced so long time that in the end they had seduced by their sorcery a number of others to be as bad as themselves, dwelling in the bounds of Lothian, which is a principal shire or part of Scotland where the King's Majesty uses to make His chieftest residence or abode.

And to the end that their detestable wickedness which they privily had pretended against the King's Majesty, the commonwealth of that country, with the nobility and subjects of the same, should come to light, God of His unspeakable goodness did reveal and lay it open in very strange sort, thereby to make known unto the world that their actions were contrary to the law of God and the natural affection

which we ought generally to bear one to another. The manner of the revealing whereof was as follows.

Within the town of Tranent in the Kingdom of Scotland there dwell sone David Seton, who being deputy bailiff in the said town had a maidservant called Geillis Duncan, who used secretly to be absent and to lie forth of her master's house every other night. This Geillis Duncan took in hand to help all such as were troubled or grieved with any kind of sickness or infirmity, and in short space did perform many matters most miraculous—which things forasmuch as she began to do them upon a sudden, having never done the like before, made her master and others to be in great admiration and wondered thereat. By means whereof the said David Seton had his maid in some great suspicion that she did not those things by natural and lawful ways, but rather supposed it to be done by some extraordinary and unlawful means.

Whereupon her master began to grow very inquisitive and examined her which way and by what means she was able to perform matters of so great importance—whereat she gave him no answer. Nevertheless, her master to the intent that he might the better try and find out the truth of the same did with the help of others torment her with the torture of the pilliwinks upon her fingers (which is a grievous torture) and binding or wrenching her head with a cord or rope (which is a most cruel torment also). Yet would she not confess anything. Whereupon they suspecting that she had been marked by the Devil (as commonly witches are) made diligent search about her and found the enemy's mark to be in her forecrag or forepart of her throat—which being found, she confessed that all her doings was done by the wicked allurements and enticements of the Devil, and that she did them by witchcraft.

After this her confession she was committed to prison, where she continued for a season, where immediately she accused these persons following to be notorious witches and caused them forthwith to be apprehended one after another, viz.: Agnis Sampson the eldest witch of them all, dwelling in Haddington; Agnes Tompson of Edinburgh; Doctor Fian, alias John Cunningham, master of the school at Salt pans

in Lothian (of whose life and strange acts you shall hear more largely in the end of this discourse); these were by the said Geillis Duncan accused, as also George Mott's wife dwelling in Salt pans, Robert Grierson skipper, and Jennet Bandilandis with the porter's wife of Seton, the smith at the bridge halls with innumerable others in that parts and dwelling in those bounds aforesaid—of whom some are already executed, the rest remain in prison to receive the doom of judgment at the King's Majesty's will and pleasure.

The said Geillis Duncan also caused Euphame MacCalzean to be apprehended, who conspired and performed the death of her godfather, and who used her art upon a gentleman being one of the Lords and Justices of the Session for bearing good will to her daughter. She also caused to be apprehended one Barbara Napier for bewitching to death Archibald, last Earl of Angus, who languished to death by witchcraft and yet the same was not suspected, but that he died of so strange a disease as the physician knew not how to cure or remedy the same. But of all other the said witches, these two last before recited were reputed for as civil honest women as any that dwelled within the city of Edinburgh before they were apprehended.

Many other besides were taken dwelling in Leith, who are detained in prison until His Majesty's further will and pleasure be known—of whose wicked doings you shall particularly hear, which was as follows.

This aforesaid Agnis Sampson which was the elder witch was taken and brought to Holyrood House before the King's Majesty and sundry other of the nobility of Scotland, where she was straitly examined, but all the persuasions which the King's Majesty used to her with the rest of His Council might not provoke or induce her to confess anything, but stood stiffly in the denial of all that was laid to her charge. Whereupon they caused her to be conveyed away to prison, there to receive such torture as hath been lately provided for witches in that country. And forasmuch as by due examination of witchcraft and witches in Scotland it hath lately been found that the Devil does generally mark them with a privy mark, by reason the witches have confessed themselves that the Devil does lick them with his tongue in

some privy part of their body before he does receive them to be his servants—which mark commonly is given them under the hair in some part of their body whereby it may not easily be found out or seen although they be searched—and generally so long as the mark is not seen to those which search them, so long the parties that has the mark will never confess anything.

Therefore by special commandment this Agnis Sampson had all her hair shaven off in each part of her body, and her head thravn with a rope according to the custom of that country (being a pain most grievous), which she continued almost an hour, during which time she would not confess anything until the Devil's mark was found upon her private area. Then she immediately confessed whatsoever was demanded of her, and justifying those persons aforesaid to be notorious witches.

Item, the said Agnes Tompson was after brought again before the King's Majesty and His Council, and being examined of the meetings and detestable dealings of those witches, she confessed that upon the night of Allhallow Even last she was accompanied as well with the persons aforesaid as also with a great many other witches, to the number of two hundred—and that all they together went by sea each one in a riddle or sieve, and went in the same very substantially with flagons of wine making merry and drinking by the way in the same riddles or sieves to the Kirk of North Berwick in Lothian. And that after they had landed, took hands on the land and danced this reel or short dance, singing all with one voice:

Commer go ye before, commer go ye,
If ye will not go before, commer let me.

At which time she confessed that this Geillis Duncan did go before them playing this reel or dance upon a small trump called a Jew's trump, until they entered into the Kirk of North Berwick.

These confessions made the King in a wonderful admiration, and sent for the said Geillis Duncan, who upon the like trump did play the said

dance before the King's Majesty, who in respect of the strangeness of these matters took great delight to be present at their examinations.

Item, the said Agnes Tompson confessed that the Devil being then at North Berwick Kirk attending their coming in the habit or likeness of a man, and seeing that they tarried over long, he at their coming enjoined them all to a penance, which was that they should kiss his buttocks in sign of duty to him—which being put over the pulpit bar, every one did as he had enjoined them. And having made his ungodly exhortations, wherein he did greatly inveigh against the King of Scotland, he received their oaths for their good and true service towards him, and departed—which done, they returned to sea and so home again.

At which time the witches demanded of the Devil why he did bear such hatred to the King, who answered: By reason the King is the greatest enemy he has in the world. All which their confessions and depositions are still extant upon record.

Item, the said Agnes Sampson confessed before the King's Majesty sundry things which were so miraculous and strange as that His Majesty said they were all extreme liars—whereat she answered she would not wish His Majesty to suppose her words to be false, but rather to believe them, in that she would discover such matter unto him as His Majesty should not any way doubt of.

And thereupon taking His Majesty a little aside, she declared unto him the very words which passed between the King's Majesty and His Queen at Oslo in Norway the first night of their marriage, with their answer each to other—whereat the King's Majesty wondered greatly and swore by the living God that he believed that all the devils in hell could not have discovered the same, acknowledging her words to be most true, and therefore gave the more credit to the rest which is before declared.

Touching this Agnes Tompson, she is the only woman who by the Devil's persuasion should have intended and put in execution the King's Majesty's death in this manner.

She confessed that she took a black toad and did hang the same up by the heels three days, and collected and gathered the venom as it dropped and fell from it in an oyster shell, and kept the same venom close covered until she should obtain any part or piece of foul linen cloth that had appertained to the King's Majesty, as shirt, handkerchief, napkin or any other thing—which she practiced to obtain by means of one John Kers, who being attendant in His Majesty's chamber, desired him for old acquaintance between them to help her to one or a piece of such a cloth as is aforesaid, which thing the said John Kers denied to help her to, saying he could not help her to it.

And the said Agnes Tompson by her depositions since her apprehension says that if she had obtained any one piece of linen cloth which the King had worn and fouled, she had bewitched him to death and put him to such extraordinary pains as if he had been lying upon sharp thorns and ends of needles.

Moreover she confessed that at the time when His Majesty was in Denmark, she being accompanied with the parties before specially named took a cat and christened it, and afterward bound to each part of that cat the chiefest parts of a dead man and several joints of his body, and that in the night following the said cat was conveyed into the midst of the sea by all these witches sailing in their riddles or sieves as is aforesaid, and so left the said cat right before the town of Leith in Scotland. This done, there did arise such a tempest in the sea as a greater has not been seen—which tempest was the cause of the perishing of a boat or vessel coming over from the town of Burntisland to the town of Leith, wherein was sundry jewels and rich gifts which should have been presented to the now Queen of Scotland at Her Majesty's coming to Leith.

Again it is confessed that the said christened cat was the cause that the King's Majesty's ship at His coming forth of Denmark had a contrary wind to the rest of His ships then being in His company—which thing was most strange and true, as the King's Majesty acknowledges, for when the rest of the ships had a fair and good wind, then was the wind contrary and altogether against His Majesty. And further the said witch

declared that His Majesty had never come safely from the sea if His faith had not prevailed above their intentions.

Moreover the said witches being demanded how the Devil would use them when he was in their company, they confessed that when the Devil did receive them for His servants and that they had vowed themselves unto Him, then He would carnally use them, albeit to their little pleasure in respect of His cold nature, and would do the like at sundry other times.

As touching the aforesaid Doctor Fian, alias John Cunningham, the examination of his acts since his apprehension declares the great subtlety of the Devil, and therefore makes things to appear the more miraculous. For being apprehended by the accusation of the said Geillis Duncan aforesaid (who confessed he was their register, and that there was not one man suffered to come to the Devil's readings but only he), the said Doctor was taken and imprisoned, and used with the accustomed pain provided for those offenses inflicted upon the rest as is aforesaid.

First, by twisting his head with a rope, but he still confessed nothing. Secondly, he was persuaded by fair means to confess his follies, but that would prevail as little.

Lastly he was put to the most severe and cruel pain in the world called the boots, who after he had received three strokes, being inquired if he would confess his damnable acts and wicked life, his tongue would not serve him to speak. In respect whereof the rest of the witches willed to search his tongue, under which was found two pins thrust up into the head—whereupon the witches did lay: Now is the charm stinted, and showed that those charmed pins were the cause he could not confess anything. Then was he immediately released of the boots, brought before the King, his confession was taken, and his own hand willingly set thereto, which contained as follows.

First, that at the general meetings of those witches he was always present; that he was clerk to all those that were in subjection to the Devil's service, bearing the name of witches; that always he did take

their oaths for their true service to the Devil, and that he wrote for them such matters as the Devil still pleased to command him.

Item, he confessed that by his witchcraft he did bewitch a gentleman dwelling near to the Saltpans, where the said Doctor kept school, only for being enamored of a gentlewoman whom he loved himself—by means of which his sorcery, witchcraft, and devilish practices he caused the said gentleman that once in 24 hours he fell into a lunacy and madness, and so continued one whole hour together. And for the verity of the same he caused the gentleman to be brought before the King's Majesty, which was upon the 24th day of December last, and being in His Majesty's chamber suddenly he gave a great screech and fell into a madness, sometime bending himself and sometime capering so directly up that his head did touch the ceiling of the chamber, to the great admiration of His Majesty and others then present—so that all the gentlemen in the chamber were not able to hold him until they called in more help, who together bound him hand and foot. And suffering the said gentleman to lie still until his fury were past, he within an hour came again to himself, when being demanded of the King's Majesty what he saw or did all that while, answered that he had been in a sound sleep.

Item the said Doctor did also confess that he had used means sundry times to obtain his purpose and wicked intent of the same gentlewoman, and seeing himself disappointed of his intention, he determined by all ways he might to obtain the same, trusting by conjuring, witchcraft, and sorcery to obtain it in this manner.

It happened this gentlewoman being unmarried had a brother who went to school with the said Doctor, and calling his scholar to him demanded if he did lie with his sister, who answered he did—by means whereof he thought to obtain his purpose, and therefore secretly promised to teach him without stripes so he would obtain for him three hairs of his sister's privates at such time as he should spy best occasion for it—which the youth promised faithfully to perform and vowed speedily to put it in practice, taking a piece of conjured paper of his master to lap them in when he had gotten them. And thereupon the boy

practiced nightly to obtain his master's purpose, especially when his sister was asleep.

But God who knows the secrets of all hearts and reveals all wicked and ungodly practices would not suffer the intents of this devilish Doctor to come to that purpose which he supposed it would, and therefore to declare that He was heavily offended with his wicked intent did so work by the gentlewoman's own means that in the end the same was discovered and brought to light. For she being one night asleep and her brother in bed with her suddenly cried out to her mother, declaring that her brother would not suffer her to sleep—whereupon her mother having a quick capacity did vehemently suspect Doctor Fian's intention, by reason she was a witch of herself, and therefore presently arose and was very inquisitive of the boy to understand his intent, and the better to know the same did beat him with sundry stripes, whereby he discovered the truth unto her.

The mother therefore being well practiced in witchcraft did think it most convenient to meet with the Doctor in his own art, and thereupon took the paper from the boy wherein he should have put the same hairs, and went to a young heifer which never had borne calf nor gone to the bull, and with a pair of shears clipped off three hairs from the udder of the cow, and wrapped them in the same paper, which she again delivered to the boy—then willing him to give the same to his said master, which he immediately did.

The schoolmaster so soon as he had received them, thinking them indeed to be the maid's hairs, went straight and wrought his art upon them. But the Doctor had no sooner done his intent to them but presently the heifer or cow whose hairs they were indeed came unto the door of the church wherein the schoolmaster was, into the which the heifer went and made towards the schoolmaster, leaping and dancing upon him and following him forth of the church and to what place soever he went, to the great admiration of all the townsmen of Saltpans and many other who did behold the same.

The report whereof made all men imagine that he did work it by the Devil, without whom it could never have been so sufficiently effected

—and thereupon the name of the said Doctor Fian (who was but a very young man) began to grow so common among the people of Scotland that he was secretly nominated for a notable conjurer.

All which although in the beginning he denied and would not confess, yet having felt the pain of the boots (and the charm stinted, as aforesaid) he confessed all the aforesaid to be most true, without producing any witnesses to justify the same, and thereupon before the King's Majesty he subscribed the said confessions with his own hand, which for truth remains upon record in Scotland.

After that the depositions and examinations of the said Doctor Fian alias Cunningham was taken, as already is declared, with his own hand willingly set thereto, he was by the master of the prison committed to ward and appointed to a chamber by himself, where forsaking his wicked ways, acknowledging his most ungodly life, showing that he had too much followed the allurements and enticements of Satan and fondly practiced his conclusions by conjuring, witchcraft, enchantment, sorcery, and such-like, he renounced the Devil and all his wicked works, vowed to lead the life of a Christian, and seemed newly converted towards God.

The morrow after upon conference had with him he granted that the Devil had appeared unto him in the night before, appareled all in black with a white wand in his hand, and that the Devil demanded of him if he would continue his faithful service according to his first oath and promise made to that effect. Whom (as he then said) he utterly renounced to his face and said unto him in this manner: "Avaunt Satan, avaunt, for I have listened too much unto thee, and by the same thou hast undone me—in respect whereof I utterly forsake thee." To whom the Devil answered: "That once ere thou die thou shalt be mine." And with that (as he said) the Devil brake the white wand and immediately vanished forth of his sight.

Thus all the day this Doctor Fian continued very solitary and seemed to have care of his own soul, and would call upon God, showing himself penitent for his wicked life. Nevertheless the same night he found such means that he stole the key of the prison door and chamber

in the which he was, which in the night he opened and fled away to the Saltpans where he was always resident and first apprehended.

Of whose sudden departure when the King's Majesty had intelligence, He presently commanded diligent inquiry to be made for his apprehension, and for the better effecting thereof He sent public proclamations into all parts of His land to the same effect. By means of whose hot and hard pursuit he was again taken and brought to prison, and then being called before the King's Highness he was reexamined as well touching his departure as also touching all that had before happened.

But this Doctor, notwithstanding that his own confession appears remaining in record under his own handwriting and the same thereunto fixed in the presence of the King's Majesty and sundry of His Council, yet did he utterly deny the same.

Whereupon the King's Majesty perceiving his stubborn willfulness conceived and imagined that in the time of his absence he had entered into new conference and league with the Devil his master, and that he had been again newly marked—for the which he was narrowly searched but it could not in any wise be found. Yet for more trial of him to make him confess he was commanded to have a most strange torment which was done in this manner following.

His nails upon all his fingers were riven and pulled off with an instrument called in Scottish a turkas, which in England we call a pair of pincers, and under every nail there was thrust in two needles over even up to the heads. At all which torments notwithstanding the Doctor never shrunk any whit, neither would he then confess it the sooner for all the torments inflicted upon him.

Then was he with all convenient speed by commandment conveyed again to the torment of the boots, wherein he continued a long time and did abide so many blows in them that his legs were crushed and beaten together as small as might be, and the bones and flesh so bruised that the blood and marrow spouted forth in great abundance, whereby they were made unserviceable forever. And notwithstanding

all these grievous pains and cruel torments he would not confess anything—so deeply had the Devil entered into his heart that he utterly denied all that which he had before avouched, and would say nothing thereunto but this: that what he had done and said before was only done and said for fear of pains which he had endured.

Upon great consideration therefore taken by the King's Majesty and His Council, as well for the due execution of justice upon such detestable malefactors as also for example's sake to remain a terror to all others hereafter that shall attempt to deal in the like wicked and ungodly actions as witchcraft, sorcery, conjuration, and such-like, the said Doctor Fian was soon after arraigned, condemned, and adjudged by the law to die, and then to be burned according to the law of that land provided in that behalf. Whereupon he was put into a cart, and being first strangled he was immediately put into a great fire being ready provided for that purpose, and there burned in the Castle Hill of Edinburgh on a Saturday in the end of January last past. 1591.

The rest of the witches which are not yet executed remain in prison till further trial and knowledge of His Majesty's pleasure.

This strange discourse before recited may perhaps give some occasion of doubt to such as shall happen to read the same, and thereby conjecture that the King's Majesty would not hazard Himself in the presence of such notorious witches, lest thereby might have ensued great danger to His person and the general state of the land—which thing in truth might well have been feared. But to answer generally to such, let this suffice: that first it is well known that the King is the child and servant of God, and they but servants to the Devil; He is the Lord's anointed, and they but vessels of God's wrath; He is a true Christian and trusts in God, they worse than infidels, for they only trust in the Devil who daily serves them till he has brought them to utter destruction. But hereby it seems that His Highness carried a magnanimous and undaunted mind, not feared with their enchantments, but resolute in this: that so long as God is with Him, He fears not who is against Him. And truly the whole scope of this treatise does so plainly lay open the wonderful providence of the Almighty that if He had not been defended by His omnipotence and power, His

Highness had never returned alive in His voyage from Denmark—so that there is no doubt but God would as well defend Him on the land as on the sea, where they pretended their damnable practice.